

Business conference to teach employers how to create insecure work is an outrage, say unions

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Unions have condemned the organisers of a conference aimed at teaching employers how to casualise and contract out their workforce.

The conference being held in Sydney today, *Contingent – The New Perm*, encourages employers to consider how they might “reduce employment costs” and “avoid the legal risk of a contingent workforce,” according to a flyer advertising the event.

The flyer goes on to say: “By reducing total reliance on permanent workers, an organisation can cut costs more quickly during a down market.”

With about 40% of Australian workers in insecure work and lacking job and income security of permanent employees, ACTU Secretary, Dave Oliver said the event showed callous disregard for the rights of working people.

“It’s pretty nauseating to see a group of consultants making money by encouraging companies to undermine the job security of their workforce,” Mr Oliver said.

“For hundreds of thousands of Australians, insecure work means weaker job and income security, and the inability to get a home loan or take a holiday.

“We need to turn the tide on insecure work and give Australians real options for secure jobs, not further corrode their rights and conditions.”

Unions NSW Secretary, Mark Lennon, said the event was indicative of a broader conservative agenda.

“About four in ten Australian workers have insecure employment which often makes it harder for them to speak up about issues like health and safety and bullying in the workplace,” Mr Lennon said.

“Here in NSW, we’ve seen the State Government casualise and contract out thousands of jobs, making it harder for those employees to plan their lives and make basic decisions.

“Campbell Newman is implementing the same agenda in Queensland and Tony Abbott has similar plans federally.

“We need to ensure that ‘flexibility’ is more than a one way street.”

Further comment: Rebecca Tucker (ACTU) 0408 031 269; Mark Lennon 0427 231 800