

Wednesday, 3 August 2011

Largest survey of Australian workers to contribute to future workplace campaigns: unions

More than 41,000 Australian workers from all industries will help shape future workplace campaigns following their participation in the biggest ever national survey of workers, conducted by unions this year.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said the response to the Working Australia Census 2011 had been overwhelming, with workers clearly wanting a say in their future.

“An early analysis of Census data has confirmed what unions believed about the cost of living placing increasing stress on workers and their families, while the work-life balance has become more and more difficult to manage,” Ms Kearney said. “Australians are working longer and harder but life is not getting easier.

“The ACTU conducted this survey because we want to ensure workers have a voice. The results of the Census will help shape our future campaigns and ensure that we are working to give Australians the better life they want and deserve. The Census results will be used to inform future union policy and campaigns as well as provide insights into the working lives of working Australians and the issues that are important to them.

“We want to thank everyone who took the time to fill in the Census, because these are the people the ACTU represents and it is so important that their views are reflected in all of our campaigns.”

The ACTU is now analysing the data from the Working Australia Census, which was open for eight weeks until 1 July. Headline results will be released in coming weeks.

Ms Kearney said respondents came from every state and territory in Australia and were aged from 15 to over 65.

Ms Kearney said she was also pleased to announce the three winners of the ACTU's Census competition, who will each receive \$1000 linked to an ME Bank account just for completing the Census.

The winners of the Census competition are Perth flight attendant Cindy Aitkenhead, Queensland nurse Matthew Dendle and Victorian library technician Lee Pattinson.

Ms Aitkenhead, a member of the Flight Attendants Association of Australia, has worked for Qantas for the past 15 years and said the increased competition among airlines had led to greater pressures on staff.

Mr Dendle, who works as a nurse at a 14-bed hospital in Mungindai, on the QLD side of the border with NSW, is completing qualifications in psychiatric nursing and said his biggest workplace concern was the poor rate of pay nurses received for the amount of work they did.

Ms Pattinson, a library technician at Neerim District Secondary College in Victoria's West Gippsland said he had been a long-time member of the Australian Education Union, which she said had improved the conditions of education support workers like her.

Media contact:

Rebecca Tucker ph (03) 9664 7359 or 0408 031 269; rtucker@actu.org.au