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New Liberal plan to scrap minimum hours of work will hurt more than 2 million casuals

More than two million Australian workers would face major pay cuts and lose their job security under a new Liberal plan to scrap the requirement to pay casuals for minimum hours of work.

Liberal leader Tony Abbott announced on radio (3AW Neil Mitchell Show, 17 February 2010) that he will scrap the requirement for casuals to be paid for a minimum shift and that he couldn't guarantee other basic employment standards would not be axed.

This is an astounding admission that millions of Australians will be worse off under Tony Abbott's extreme industrial relations policies, said ACTU President Sharan Burrow.

"This latest announcement is further proof that Tony Abbott will reintroduce WorkChoices and that he is being dishonest in saying it is 'dead'," Ms Burrow said.

"Losing a guarantee of minimum hours of work will put at risk the income and job security of 2.5 million Australian workers who are employed casually.

"It would give employers the power to dictate working hours.

"Tony Abbott's plan means employers would be able to call in staff and send them home after as little as half an hour.

"It's outrageous for him to suggest a 15-year-old school student could negotiate his working conditions with his employer.

"This is what happened to a lot of young people, especially those working in shops and cafes under WorkChoices.

"They were ripped off and exploited by employers who had all the power and workers had none.

"The Liberals don't seem to have learnt anything from the drubbing they received from the Australian public at the last election."

Earlier this week, the Liberals also revealed they would reintroduce individual contracts, cut penalty rates and allow millions of Australians to be sacked unfairly.

"It can only be a matter of time before Tony Abbott announces he will get rid of other minimum standards such as four weeks annual leave and public holidays, as occurred under WorkChoices," said Ms Burrow.

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