

Tuesday 9 April 2013

Workchoices resurrected? Coalition have all but confirmed the worst for workers

Unions angry at Coalition leaked documents that show four key Workchoices policies - that the Australian public clearly voted against - would be resurrected if the Coalition wins government in September.

The documents reveal 4 of the 15 industrial relations policies the Coalition says it is planning to implement. These include:

- **Allow individual agreements to run for 4 years.** Like the 5 year unfair individual contracts under **Section 352** of WorkChoices;
- **Require workers to individually ask for representation in bargaining.** Just like the “Bargaining Agents” system under **Section 335** of WorkChoices;
- **Cut minimum hours of work for young workers.** Just like the unfair individual contracts that stripped award conditions under **Section 354** of WorkChoices;
- **Restore unilateral “employer greenfield agreements”** where employers can dictate the terms of agreements on new projects or business without the agreement of workers or unions. Just like the old **Section 330** of WorkChoices.

ACTU Secretary Dave Oliver said it was clear the Coalition would stay true to their partylines and reward big business at the expense of working Australians.

“They say they have consulted with unions but have not approached us about any of these proposals,” he said.

“The only winner here is big business and a coalition that aims to disempower workers.”

“These policies are acutely one-sided and in the interest of business without any consideration for workers and their representatives.”

“The proposal on Greenfields allows an employer to reach an agreement with themselves – a bizarre situation. There is no need for them to attempt genuine negotiations because they know that at the end of the day what they say goes.”

Mr Oliver said this would mean more power to employers to dictate terms, conditions and employment to the detriment of workers.

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