

Friday 27 February 2026

## AI: Unions put corporate Australia on notice

Australian Unions are warning employers they will be ramping up their campaign insisting employers are transparent and follow their legal obligations to consult the minute they choose to adopt AI.

Employers who do not abide by their legal obligation to consult workers when a decision is made to introduce AI will face an ACTU-led coordinated response.

The ACTU has written to employer peak bodies reminding them of their obligations under the law and to consult with workers when they decide to adopt AI, where it is likely to change employees' jobs or how they do them.

Many union-negotiated enterprise agreements contain stronger clauses that require consultation before a decision is made, or with more specific requirements around AI. However, these basic legal obligations to immediately consult apply to all employers.

Artificial intelligence, automated decision-making systems and algorithmic management tools are being rapidly introduced across Australian workplaces, with the potential to significantly alter how work is performed, how workers are monitored and assessed, and the skills required to perform work.

Australian creative workers, journalists and academics have already endured massive disruptions to their industries and multi-national AI companies have engaged in the wholesale theft of workers' output.

### Quotes attributable to ACTU Assistant Secretary, Joseph Mitchell:

"Australia is not America. Australian workers have strong rights that require employers to immediately and transparently engage with their workforce and work out how they will avoid job losses and retrain their workforce.

"Employers have an obligation in law to meaningfully consult with workers and their representatives as soon as a decision is made to introduce AI and before its implementation.

"Consultation is a clear requirement of Australian employers, and the ACTU will coordinate a response to any employer who does not abide by their legal obligation, placing themselves at risk of disputation proceedings and reputation damage.

"Workers do not want to see mass sackings as a result of AI being brought in, workers have a right to a say in how technology is introduced into the workplace."

**ENDS**

**Media contact: Luisa Saccotelli (0400 149 901)**