



NEWSLETTER

September 2009

Industrial Relations Society of the Northern Territory (IRSNT)

SECRETARIAT

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2009 COMMITTEE

President

Naomi Porrovecchio

Vice-President

Deevya Desai

Immediate Past

President

Samantha Miles

Secretary

Chris Hancock

Treasurer

Christina Petriwskyj

Assistant Treasurer

Anna McGill

Committee Members

Amy Griesbach
Erina Early
Daniel Lesperance

Secretariat Officer

Johanna Clark

Patron

Commissioner Brendan
Eames (retired)

NOTE: The views of the contributors are not necessarily those of the IRSNT.

President's Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2009! There are plenty of changes happening on the IR front with the Fair Work Act commencing on the 1st of July 2009. The global financial crisis poses new challenges for employers and employees and formed the basis for the IIRA World Congress in Sydney last month. Coinciding with the World Congress was the meeting of the Industrial Relations Society of Australia, where we thanked the exceptional contribution our outgoing president, Professor Russell Landsbury, who handed the baton over to the Northern Territory for 2010.



The AGM held last year elected a new IRSNT committee and I welcome Amy Griesbach, Chris Hancock, Christina Petriwskyj and Erina Early. Daniel Lesperance has recently joined the committee and we welcome him. Myself, Anna McGill and Deevya Desai continued our commitment to the Society by renominating. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing committee, in particular immediate past President Samantha Miles who did an extraordinary job over many years to ensure the Society was in good financial shape, provided members with access to informative events and that the Society contributed to the industrial relations debate. An enormous amount of time and effort is given by members of the committee, in their own time while they manage jobs, kids and homes.

The new committee looks forward to seeing you at one of our events, particularly our Annual Convention. The program is filled with interesting and well respected practitioners and is the centrepiece of the IRSNT's activities for the year. I hope to see you there.

Introducing the 2009 IRSNT committee

Naomi Porrovecchio (President)

Naomi's family moved to Darwin in 1979. Naomi completed her schooling here and commenced work with the then Department of Mines and Energy. After an 11 year stint in various NTPS agencies, Naomi became an Advisor in the new NT Labor Government to Hon Peter Toyne MLA, and then Senator Trish Crossin. Naomi started work with the Community and Public Sector Union in 2004 and in 2006 became the Regional Director. Naomi has recently started working at the Office of Women's Policy and she is also a council member of Unions NT and is the incoming President of the Industrial Relations Society of Australia. Naomi is a devoted Collingwood fan and is currently studying Law at CDU.

Deevya Desai (Vice-President)

Deevya first came to Darwin in 1997. She left to undertake a Bachelor of Law and a Bachelor of Arts at The Australian National University and in 2007, returned to work at Cridlands MB Lawyers as a graduate clerk and later, a commercial lawyer. Deevya is a bookworm and art enthusiast. She is also a marketing coordinator for the Young Professionals Network (NT).



Introducing the 2009 IRSNT committee continued...

Chris Hancock (Secretary)

Chris has lived and worked in the NT since 1989. Originally with an allied health background, Chris became more interested in HR and IR matters as she moved into management roles. For approximately the past 10 years, Chris has worked specifically in HR/IR in various government agencies including Justice, Education and Training and more recently has taken on the role of Manager, HR Operations in PowerWater Corporation. With a relationship of some 5 - 6 years with the IRSNT, Chris has rejoined the committee as Secretary.

Christina Petriwskyj (Treasurer)

Christina is a HR professional with experience in both generalist HR and project-based work (e.g. restructures) at regional, national and international level. She holds a Bachelor of Business (majoring in HR and Marketing) and a Bachelor of Arts (majoring in Organisational Psychology). Christina has mostly engaged in contract work throughout her career, enabling her to have experienced HR/IR in a variety of industries.

Anna McGill (Assistant Treasurer)

Anna is a local Territorian having grown up throughout the NT. She practiced as a solicitor for 5 years before moving into government in the IR/HR area. Anna is currently Acting Director of Compensation and Information at NT WorkSafe. She has one child and another on the way (congratulations Anna!).

Amy Griesbach (Committee Member)

Amy was born in Darwin and completed all of her schooling here. She is employed as Senior Consultant, Employment Services at Charles Darwin University and has been part of the People Management and Development team since 2005. She holds a Bachelor of Business majoring in Management and recently completed the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. She is currently working 4 days a week, has 2 young children, and enjoys playing netball in what spare time she has!

Erina Early (Committee Member)

Erina is the Senior Industrial Relations Officer at the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union and has been with the LHMU for over 2 years. Before moving to Darwin Erina lived in the UK, running pubs and travelling the world. Erina has just completed her Masters of Industrial Relations and is also undertaking her Bachelor of Law at CDU.

Daniel Lesperance (Committee Member)

Daniel is the Human Resources Manager with the Central Land Council and has been in this position for the past 3 ½ years, which is also the time he has lived in Alice Springs. Daniel holds a Bachelors Degree in Management Studies from the UK and is currently undertaking an MBA with Curtin University. Daniel has worked in Human Resources for over 10 years with his last job being with Heinz Europe Seafood Department as the Labor Projects Manager and has over the years developed a great interest in Organisational Behaviour and Industrial Relations.

Johanna Clark (Secretariat Officer)

Johanna previously worked for 16 years at Cridlands lawyers, working her way up the ladder from administration through to paralegal for various partners. She is also employed as Office Manager for her husbands business organising quotes, wages and general office work. Johanna also arranges two fishing competitions a year which is almost a full time job in itself. She has three children, two girls and a boy, all under 5 years and has lived in Darwin for the past 28 years.

Reminder...

Membership renewals are now due for the 2009/2010 year.

Benefits of IRSNT membership include:

- Subscription to the "Journal of Industrial Relations"
- Discounted rates for all IRSNT events and seminars
- Opportunity to network with other IR practitioners
- Access to online forum regarding current issues
- Support of a great NT institution!

New members welcome.

Membership application forms are available on our website.

www.irsnt.asn.au

Fair Work Act

The Fair Work Act is part of the government's policy to nationalize and streamline the industrial relations system. The legislation has established a new body, Fair Work Australia, which will investigate complaints relating to workplace relations. Fair Work Australia has functions that are distributed amongst several bodies pursuant to the current workplace relations regime. These functions include setting minimum wages, making orders concerning industrial action and bargaining, considering unfair dismissal claims and reviewing awards and agreements. The legislation also provides for sections within the Federal Court and the Federal Magistrate's Court to specifically consider workplace relations claims.

Another key proposed change is a reduction in the number of employees a business can have in order to constitute a "small business", for the purposes of the unfair dismissal regime. In order to fall within the definition of "small business", a business must employ less than 15 employees. The liability of small businesses for unfair dismissal is primarily determined by the Fair Dismissal Code for Small Business.

The main provisions of the Act commenced on 1 July 2009. These provisions relate to matters including bargaining and dismissal. The government's comments to the press on this Act and fact sheets with detailed information on the Act can be accessed via the following hyperlinks: www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Pages/default, and www.fwa.gov.au

NES and Modern Awards

In the Government's new workplace relations system all employees will be covered by a safety net, which are minimum protections that cannot be stripped away. The safety net will comprise two parts—the National Employment Standards and new modern awards. It will apply to all employees in the federal system from 1 January 2010.

The National Employment Standards

The National Employment Standards (NES) are minimum employment conditions and replace the former Australian Fair Pay and Conditions Standards.

The 10 NES are:

- Maximum weekly hours of work
- The right to request flexible working arrangements
- Parental leave and related entitlements
- Annual leave
- Personal/Carer's leave and compassionate leave
- Community service leave
- Long service leave
- Public holidays
- Notice of termination and redundancy pay
- Provision of a Fair Work Information Statement.

Modern Awards

Modern awards will be industry or occupation based and will streamline and simplify thousands of awards. Modern awards build on the NES and may include an additional 10 minimum conditions of employment, tailored to the needs of the particular industry or occupation. These include minimum wages, types of employment, arrangements for when work is performed, overtime and penalty rates, annualised wage or salary arrangements, allowances, leave related matters, superannuation and procedures for consultation, representation and dispute settlement. The Commission will include a flexibility clause in each modern award which will enable employers and employees to negotiate arrangements to meet their individual needs. Protections will make sure that an employee is better off overall under the flexibility arrangement.

For more information visit www.fwa.gov.au and www.airc.gov.au/awardmod/





Book Review

Cambridge University Press has published a new book titled 'Trade Unionism in Australia: A history from flood to ebb tide' by Tom Bramble. Tom Bramble is a member of the Industrial Relations Society of Queensland.

The book tells the story of Australian unionism from the height of its power and influence in the late 1960s and early '70s to its nadir in the 2000s. It provides insight into the activities of Australian unions from the shop floor to federal politics. It traces the impact of hostile governments, as well as a wholesale shift in employer attitudes, radical changes to the structure of the workforce, neoliberal globalisation, and economic stability. It is a timely, comprehensive study written by an author who has been a union activist throughout the past two decades.

The book has had very positive feedback:

"Tom Bramble's book title provides a penetrating analysis of the recent history of the Australian trade union movement. It also tells an exciting story of conflict, inspiring mass activity, huge mistakes, defeats and triumphs. It has no competitors in its systematic account of important decades of union activity and provides a superior assessment of specific events and episodes. Trade Unionism in Australia is indispensable to anyone interested in the current state of the Australian union movement and its future, industrial relations policy and labour history".

Rick Kubn, Reader in Political Science, Australian National University, winner of the 2007 Deutscher Memorial Prize.

IRSNT members are entitled to a 20% discount on the purchase price of this book. Read more about Trade Unionism in Australia: <http://www.cambridge.org/aus/9780521716123>.

Upcoming Events...



September 2009

IRSNT Annual Convention

A Fair Future??

Friday, 18 September 2009
 Darwin Airport Resort

November 2009

AGM and Patron's Dinner

Following the 2009 AGM, a dinner will be held honouring IRSNT's Patron, Commissioner Brendan Eames, who has recently retired from the AIRC after many years of dedication and service.

Past Events...

14 July 2009

Health & Safety Representatives in the Workplace

Lunch & Learn — Darwin Central
 Presenters: Neil Burgess, Paul Kirby, Annette Wallace

12 March 2009

Bully proofing your Organisation

Seminar—SkyCity Casino
 Presenters: Dr Stewart Hase, Samantha Miles, Peter Sullivan, Terry Lisson.

Members are invited to email in newsletter contributions or seminar topic suggestions.

Your feedback is also important to us, whether it be good or bad, so that the society can continually strive to offer a valuable membership.

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