



Paul Bastian, AMWU National Secretary

TOP PRIORITY: NEW SKILLS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

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The centerpiece of Labor's policy is to put \$285 million into reviving the popular Tools for Your Trade initiative which was axed by the Coalition in 2014. When added to guaranteed funds for TAFE and a \$10 million a year boost for Group Training Companies to assist employers hire new apprentices, Labor would help claw back the devastating decline in apprentice numbers under the Coalition.

Apprenticeships and traineeship numbers have fallen 40 per cent in the past four years, a drop of 122,000 places.

"The AMWU has persistently pushed for the political parties to meet our national skills crisis and only one side has listened," said AMWU President, Andrew Dettmer.

"More young apprentices than ever are dropping out because the financial pressure from very low wages is just too much, with the Coalition's Trade Support Loans worsening this by throwing thousands of them deeply into debt.

"Tools for Your Trade can mean all the



difference between having to drop out and emerging with a trade qualification." The Tools for Your Trade program builds on Labor's election pledge to create 2600 new jobs for apprentices by setting aside one in every ten positions on new Federal Government infrastructure projects.

The AMWU has also succeeded in persuading labor to appoint a national Apprentice Advocate, to guarantee apprentices get the right entitlements and are better protected from bullying.

The policies go with Labor's new Apprentice Ready scheme unveiled by opposition Leader Bill Shorten, which creates 10,000 pre-apprenticeship places in required trades for young, unemployed people using TAFE as the trusted cornerstone of the training system.

This contrasted with the Coalition "PaTH" solution to offer young, unemployed people internships on wages of \$4 an hour.

An extra 5000 places will be created under a pilot program to help retrenched workers return to the workforce by formal Skills Recognition through matching their skills to relevant traineeships, apprenticeships or emerging occupations.

"As manufacturing transitions out of car making, Labor is the only party to come up with a viable, multi-pronged plan to ease the way into new jobs for thousands of workers facing displacement," Mr Dettmer said.

"It relies on restoring the place of TAFE as the prime provider of quality training for both mature workers and apprentices within the training system, which the Coalition has stripped of funds."

Mr Dettmer said the AMWU would like to see both major parties commit to TAFE getting a guaranteed 70 per cent of the national training budget, the best way it could recover from years of savage cuts by the Coalition at state and federal level. Association to be placed with employers. ■

DRY ARGUMENT AS CUB SACKS FITTERS

Maintenance workers at CUB's main brewery in Melbourne are protesting at the company terminating their jobs then expecting them to sign up again with a 65 per cent pay cut.

The 32 AMWU fitters and 22 electricians, members of the ETU, had their employment terminated last Friday week so a new contractor could bring in its own labour force on base wage rates far less than the axed enterprise agreement.

Workers with up to 34 years of CUB experience are protesting alongside apprentices outside the Abbotsford plant as mini-buses with blocked-out windows take in the novice workforce recruited from interstate.

The flow of beers including VB, Carlton Dry, Pure Blonde and Carlton Draught has slowed to a dribble as non-union recruits struggle to maintain and repair the brewing, bottling and packaging machinery.

A united 24-hour protest is growing by the day, with well-known community worker Father Bob Maguire visiting and getting on our PA system to blast CUB management about putting its corporate greed ahead of the brotherhood of man.

Hundreds of angry customers have taken to CUB's facebook pages for Pure Blonde and VB, expressing their disgust at the sacking of the 54 workers.

GO TO THE VB FACEBOOK PAGE

**www.facebook.com/VB/
AND LEAVE A MESSAGE**

AMWU Assistant State Secretary Craig Kelly branded CUB's brutal action a deliberate union-busting attempt, planned in advance as it had stockpiled weeks of beer supply to pubs and big retailers.



Victorians Bitter: Protesting maintenance members of the AMWU and ETU outside the CUB plant in Melbourne, where they kept the beer flowing until suddenly sacked a few weeks ago.

Mechanical fitters are being offered a base rate of just \$19.50 under a new non-union enterprise agreement— just 50c above the lowest award base.

"This has already backfired big time on CUB. Soon it will be a dry old argument for retailers and drinkers, just as our members have been bled dry by being overworked, then discarded," Craig Kelly said.

"We will keep protesting as the headache gets worse for CUB,

which will have to eventually deal with unions and provide its workforce with normal, decent EBA wages and conditions."

AMWU member Chris Brown said CUB had worked its maintenance crews over 60 hours per week, but refused to employ more workers.

"We wanted them to put more people on, they wouldn't, they worked us 12 hours and even 16 hour shifts but now they've left us with nothing, sacked with no real notice," he said. ■



**HERE'S TO 65%
LESS PAY FOR
OUR WORKERS**