



## International Women's Day

**On International Women's Day, March 8, the Australian Services Union hosted a celebration for ASU Women.**

It was a fun evening, with champagne and nibbles, women sharing experiences and exchanging ideas about life balance and stress prevention.

ASU Women were also able to discuss superannuation and financial planning with Australian Super and Industry Fund Financial Planning.

### Members Equity Prize Draw

Congratulations to ASU Member Jacqueline Bailey for



winning the Members Equity Savings Account with an opening balance of \$100.

Jackie said "It was fun and that it was a really good way to meet people. I left with a sense of connection."

## Challenges for Working Women

Guest Speaker Cath Bowtell, ACTU Industrial Officer, spoke about some general challenges for working women.

Cath explained that women are the hardest hit under Work Choices, and since the introduction of this anti-union legislation, women's wages have actually fallen by some two percent.

Women on Australian Workplace Agreement's earn \$2.90 an hour less than women on collective agreements.

Cath further discussed a report "From a lucky country to a nation dominated work." According to the report "in the last three decades,



working patterns have altered to such an extent that Australia is now the only high-income country in the world that combines:

- ➔ average working hours that are at the top end amongst high income nations
- ➔ a strong tendency for work

on weeknights and weekends, and

- ➔ a relatively large proportion of the working population employed on a casual basis." (Relationships Forum Report, page 22).

Our greatest challenge in these circumstances is to find a way to enjoy a consistent pattern of life outside work – to spend time on a predictable basis with family and friends and in other community related pursuit.

Where expectations of work are so incompatible with our lives outside work we must empower change together.



# Launch of ASU Stress in the Workplace Project: A pro-active approach

Deirdre Chance, Project Officer for the ASU Stress in the Workplace Project (funded by Workcover Return to Work Fund) facilitated a discussion about stress.

ASU Women agree the best way to deal with stress is to focus on promoting good health.

Deirdre explained that workplace stress is the biggest emerging threat to employee health. Workplace stress is estimated to cost Australia more than \$7b each year.

A proactive approach that focuses on a healthy workplace has clear benefits for everyone because stress prevention leads to a healthier workplace and healthier

workers.

The ASU want to work with organisations to address workplace stress before it takes a toll.

The ASU are willing to work in collaboration with organisations to develop an approach that is consistent with good OHS practice.

Under the OHS Act 2004 the employer must provide a healthy and safe workplace and this responsibility extends to mental



health.

**Please feel free to contact Deirdre Chance on 9320 6700 or 0430 355 554 for more information about our project.**

## Too much stress causes physical and psychological changes:

### Short term:

- Irritability
- Exhaustion
- Lack of job satisfaction
- Increased smoking
- Increased drinking

### Long term:

- Lowered immunity
- Digestive disorders
- Muscular pain
- Depression
- Anxiety

## Thank you

Thank you to all the women who attended and for your positive contribution in making ASU International Women's Day Event a success.

All ASU Women are welcome to attend next year's ASU International Women's Day event.

## Here are some simple healthy ways ASU Women relax outside work:

- |   |                                      |   |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| ✓ Calling a friend  | ✓ family and/or friends              | ✓ Stretching                              |
| ✓ Walking   | ✓ Gym or Club                        | ✓ Giving someone a hug (or receiving one) |
| ✓ Dancing   | ✓ Having a good sleep                | ✓ Pampering yourself in some way          |
| ✓ Scheduling fun activities as appointments in your diary | ✓ Burning essential oils and candles | ✓ Meditation/relaxed breathing            |
| ✓ Listening to music                                      | ✓ Sipping herbal tea                 |   |
| ✓ Spending quality time with                              | ✓ Reading something of interest      |   |





# Australian Services Union stress survey

There is no need to put your name on the questionnaire and all answers will remain confidential.

**1. What industry sector do you work in?**

- Airlines & Related
- General Clerical/Admin (ASU Assist)
- Customer Service Centres
- Freight & Logistics
- Legal
- Manufacturing
- Non Profit Organisations
- Retail
- Govt Admin & Misc
- Trade Unions
- Wagering & Gaming

**2. How long have you been in your current position?**

- Less than 12 months
- Between 12 months and 2 years
- Between 2 years and 5 years
- More than 5 years
- More than 10 years

**3. How old are you?**

- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- older than 60

**4. Do you have influence over how your work is organised?**

- Yes
- No

**5. Are job tasks clearly predictable or are they allocated as last minute deadlines?**

- Usually predictable
- Sometimes predictable
- Rarely predictable

**6. Do you know exactly what is required of you at work?**

- Yes
- No

**7. Is too much required of you at work?**

- Yes
- No

**8. Does your job involve contacts with clients/public?**

- Yes
- No

**9. Have you been adequately trained to perform your job?**

- Yes
- No



# Australian Services Union stress survey

10. Do you experience conflict at work?

- Yes  
 No

11. Have you experienced organisational change at work over the past 12 months?

- Yes  
 No

12. Do you suffer from any of the following?  
(Write N for Never; S for Sometimes; or F for Frequently)

- Headaches  
 Cramps  
 Indigestion  
 Insomnia  
 Fatigue  
 High blood pressure

13. Have you taken leave from work during the past 12 months due to work stress?

- Yes  
 No

14. If you answered yes to question 10, what type of leave did you take?

- Sick leave  
 Recreation leave  
 Workers' compensation  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

15. If you answered yes to question 10, what do you believe is the cause of your stress?

- Organisational change/restructure  
 Excessive workload  
 Poor communication  
 Job insecurity  
 Supervisor conflict, harassment  
 Insufficient training  
 Accommodation, working conditions  
 Public/client conflict  
 Child care problems  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

16. What would be the solution to your stress at work?

- Reduce workload  
 Achievable deadlines  
 Opportunity to participate in decision making  
 Better training/information  
 Better conflict resolution procedures  
 Better communication with supervisor  
 Work based child care  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. All responses will remain confidential.

**Please forward the completed questionnaire to Deirdre Chance, Stress Project Officer, PO Box 324, North Melbourne 3051.**