



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 30 November 2006

UNION PROTEST A FIZZER

Statement by Mr Peter Hendy, Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, has welcomed the fact that the overwhelming majority of Australian workers and businesses today got on with the job and shunned union protests against workplace reform.

Despite a major publicity blitz and a year long campaign against WorkChoices, according to media reports significantly fewer people attended today's ACTU National Day of Action rallies than those held in the middle of the year – notwithstanding the free rock concert at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

A half full MCG is a sorry sight. This union protest was a fizzer.

Reports suggest that significantly less than 100,000 people attended today's trade union rallies around the country, with a large proportion of these protesters state public servants and regular union and political activists.

The National Day of Action should be renamed the National Day of Inaction.

Over 99% of Australia's 10 million employees shunned the rallies. The union movement couldn't even get 10% of its own union members to attend.

More members of the public were inconvenienced in going about their daily life by today's union rallies than people turning up to them. ACCI has calculated that every 100,000 people that left the workplace for these political rallies cost GDP some \$31 million.

The rallies did not create one new job. In contrast, 840 jobs are now being created each day and 203,400 new jobs have been created since WorkChoices became law. Before we started workplace reform in Australia we had 10% unemployment. Now we have 4.6%.

For further information:

Peter Hendy	Chief Executive	02 6273 2311 / 0419 422 650
Peter Anderson	Director, Workplace Policy	03 9668 9950 / 0417 264 862
Brett Hogan	Director of Communications	03 9668 9950 / 0407 273 884

MR 126/06

www.acci.asn.au

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