



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

MEDIA RELEASE

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INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES AT HISTORIC LOWS

Statement by Mr Peter Hendy, Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australia's largest and most representative employer and business organisation, has welcomed the release of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data today showing continued historically low levels of industrial disputes in Australia.

Data for the June quarter shows that days lost to industrial disputes in Australia have fallen to just 3.1 days lost per 1000 employees, even though the ACTU held its national day of protest during the survey period. This comes on top of data for the March quarter showing 3.4 days lost per 1000 employees.

The reduction in industrial disputes reflects a major change in Australian workplace relations since workplace reform commenced. 104.6 days were lost to industrial action per 1000 employees in December 1992, 52.2 days in June 1996, 16.6 days in June 2001, and 6.1 days in June 2005.

These figures show that the workplace is not dispute-ridden as unions would have Australians believe. Australia's new workplace relations laws are based on agreement, not conflict. Australian employers and employees can increasingly negotiate agreements cooperatively, without any suggestion of strikes or bans.

Employers and employees are rejecting political rhetoric from the union movement about workplace reform, and are getting on with business. The sooner the union movement joins them, starts dealing in facts rather than prejudices, and engages *WorkChoices* on its merits, the better off we will all be.

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