



Centre for Workforce Futures

PANEL DISCUSSION SERIES

The Impact of COVID-19 on Industrial Relations and Working Futures

5 Jun 2020

Panel 1: Changing the Rules on Enterprise Agreements

2:00–3:30 PM
on Zoom

Speakers: Professor Louise Thornthwaite

The Hon. Adam Searle MLC, NSW Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council & Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations
Mark Morey, Secretary of Unions NSW

Facilitator: Professor Lucy Taksa

COVID-19 has led to massive changes in the world of industrial relations and work, the future of which is of immense interest for the community, scholars and public policy. The Centre for Workforce Futures is hosting a series of panel discussions on the implications of the COVID-19 lockdown and its aftermath for industrial relations and working futures.

The first panel discussion in the series will examine a key regulatory change made in April 2020. The federal government passed amendments to make it quicker and easier for employers to vary wages and conditions in enterprise agreements. The amendments, made to the *Fair Work Regulations*, reduce the time required to consult with employees over proposed variations to an enterprise agreement from seven days to one day. This reduced notification period applies to all employers and employees covered by the Fair Work Act 2009.

The amendment will apply for six months. However, any variations will only have a time limit if that time limit is specified in the variation. Otherwise, a variation of wages and conditions will continue operating indefinitely until the agreement is varied, replaced or terminated. Further, the six-month period in which this regulatory change operates, could be extended by the Government.

The Centre for Workforce Futures Zoom panel on Friday 5th June will examine the impacts of such changes on enterprise agreements and the implications for employee wages and conditions post-lockdown.

REGISTER

<https://eventbrite.com.au/e/106174384442>

Details on how to join by Zoom will be sent to registrants.

THE SPEAKERS

Louise Thornthwaite is Professor of Management and Employment Relations and Deputy Director, Centre for Workforce Futures at Macquarie University. Louise has published widely on industrial relations regulation and policy, social media at work, supply chain regulation of occupational health and safety, employer association and strategy, and the impacts of law and policy on management practice.

The Hon. Adam Searle has been a Member of the NSW Legislative Council since May 2011, where he is Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Climate Change & Energy, for Industrial Relations, and for Planning & Better Living.

From 1995–2000, Adam was Chief of Staff to NSW Attorney General and Minister for Industrial Relations, Jeff Shaw and was involved in significant law reform across a range of areas such as anti-discrimination, occupational health and safety and special laws for those suffering asbestos and related illnesses. From 2000, Adam was a barrister in the areas of employment and industrial law. He was involved in the pay equity case for childcare workers and in examining the law relating to workplace deaths.

Mark Morey was elected Secretary of Unions NSW in February 2016, having been Assistant Secretary from 2009–2016. From 2005–2008, Mark was the Executive Officer at the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (NSW Branch) responsible for coordinating its political, industrial and campaigning activities. Prior to joining Unions NSW, Mark worked as a social worker at the Department of Social Security, a Youth Development Officer at Penrith Council, and as the Executive Officer of the Youth Action and Policy Association. Mark holds a Bachelor of Social Work, Graduate Diploma in Equity and Social Administration and Masters of Social Work from UNSW Sydney and a Bachelor of Law from University of Technology Sydney.



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