



WA BRANCH

YEAR IN REVIEW

2022

WA BRANCH

SECRETARY

REPORT

2022 has been a good year for many AWU members but has also come with its fair share of struggles and challenges including the resurgence of COVID-19, a change of Federal Government, cost of living pressures and many hard-fought EBA campaigns.

The feedback I've received from our members is that our industrial, legal and admin team is second to none & I absolutely agree.

In all my time within the union movement, I've never seen such a level of commitment and focus on workplace power and member representation.

A key result of putting members first is being able to deliver significant and substantial industrial outcomes that we can all be proud of.

Our strategic approach has achieved record growth that will provide and maintain the level of representation and resources required in a modern industrial environment.

Once again, this year our organisers covered thousands of kilometres representing members across a wide range of industries. Our alliance partnerships in the Offshore Alliance and Western Mine Workers' Alliance have continued to break ground in the Offshore and Mining sectors.

The AWU will continue to fight each and every day to lift wages and improve safety and working conditions.

We trust our Year in Review provides a quality summary of our industrial outcomes, membership engagement and overall Branch activities.

I wish all our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Brad Gandy

WA Branch Secretary

The Australian Workers' Union



MORE MEMBERS MEANS MORE RESOURCES

AWU GROWS TO OVER 10,000 MEMBERS

Thanks to the hard work of all AWU members, delegates, and branch staff the WA Branch has now hit over 10,000 members on the roll. What this means is that the AWU in WA now has more resources than ever before for members including;

- Fully resourced organising teams in the South West, North West, Goldfields, Mid West and Perth-Peel regions;
- 3 experienced in-house lawyers;
- Over \$100,000 spent on external Senior Counsel for members' legal matters such as EBAs, allowances and rostering disputes;
- Regular member updates through dedicated social media and email channels;
- Significant increase in AWU members covered by Enterprise Bargaining Agreements and reducing employer use of baseline agreements;
- Renewed partnerships with Eureka Lawyers, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, Chifley Income Protection and ShopRite.

The more we grow the more resources we have to support you at work.



*Thank you for your continued
support and membership!*

AWU MEMBERS KEEP WA STRONG



Cockburn Cement EBA



Alcoa Delegates AGM



Gold Fields Australia - No Vote



CBH Mingenew



May Day 2022



Main Roads Geraldton



Nannup Timber BBQ



2022 AWU National Conference



Supporting Timber Workers



Water Corp Wanneroo



Cleanaway Kwinana



2022 Federal Election



Containers for Change



Delegate Training

MAIN ROADS IN-HOUSING 2022

BETTER PAID, MORE SECURE JOBS AT MAIN ROADS

In April this year Premier Mark McGowan announced that the WA Government would be bringing more than 600 road maintenance workers in-house as direct employees of Main Roads Western Australia. The announcement will provide secure, better paid employment for hundreds of AWU members and road maintenance workers in WA.

AWU Organisers, Andy and Jeff have been busy traversing our vast state visiting our members in Northam, Carnarvon, Port Hedland, Geraldton, and Jurien Bay.

Our Road Maintenance members work hard every day to keep our roads safe and now they are receiving the recognition and job security they deserve from the State Government.

The AWU will always have your back, no matter where you work.



AWU NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2022



AWU WA Branch's 2022 National Conference Delegation

HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

In August, the WA Branch sent our largest ever delegation to the Australian Workers' Union National Conference in Sydney. The AWU National Conference determines the direction and areas of focus for our union heading into the following two years.

Union members, delegates and officials were able to hear from branches across Australia and share our experience of organising in Western Australia. WA Branch Secretary, Brad Gandy gave a report on behalf of the branch and many of our organisers were able to give presentations in break-out sessions on their respective industries.

MORE THAN JUST HOT AIR - NATIONAL GAS CRISIS

The Conference heard from delegates from the east coast working in manufacturing who are facing not only increased personal electricity bills but are having their jobs threatened by sky-rocketing gas prices.

Western Australia is not part of the National Energy Market (NEM) and made the courageous decision in 2006 to enact a gas reservation policy, which meant that 15% of all locally produced gas must be set aside for use by local businesses and industry.

The AWU National Conference passed an emergency resolution calling on the new Albanese Federal Government to speed up its review of the Australia Domestic Gas Security Mechanism, to include a price trigger and pull it, in order to give certainty to the nation's manufacturers. Noting that a national gas reservation policy similar to Western Australia's policy would have helped avoid the crisis faced through the National Energy Market on the east coast.

BACKING THE HYDROGEN REVOLUTION



The energy revolution is already underway, and we are campaigning to make sure that Australians see the benefits of investment, jobs, and a booming export market.

At the Conference the AWU committed to supporting the hydrogen industry. The resolution called on Australian governments “to reject a narrow, green-focused hydrogen agenda” and instead prioritise the scaling-up of hydrogen this decade – “irrespective of type” – to maximise the opportunity for the hydrogen export economy.” This approach protects our existing members jobs while also supporting them to transition into a new hydrogen industry.

SOLIDARITY WITH UKRAINE

Nobody wins in war. The AWU delegates showed solidarity with our Ukraine brothers and sisters who are fighting for their very survival.

AWU delegates heard from Vasyl Myroshnychenko the Ambassador of Ukraine to Australia about the conflict and harsh realities facing the Ukrainian people.

The Conference supported a motion rejecting the war on Ukraine calling for Russia to leave Ukraine and supporting the Australian Government’s commitment to providing aid to Ukraine.



SKILLED MIGRATION REFORM



The AWU will not allow Australian pay and conditions to be eroded by big business’ desire for cheap labour.

The Conference passed a resolution to end the bitter disputes on migration policy between unions and employers. AWU National Secretary, Daniel Walton said “If hiring an Australian isn’t possible today, employers should have to make sure it’s possible tomorrow.”

Employers should not be allowed to shirk their responsibilities to train Australians and only fill the gaps with short-term migrants.

**PROUD TO BE
AWU**

FIGHTING FOR YOU

THE BIG ISSUES AND BATTLES OF 2022

GOLD FIELDS VOTE NO CAMPAIGN



In March 2022 Gold Fields Australia attempted to rush through a subpar agreement after 4 days of negotiations. The agreement had no guaranteed pay increases, leaving wage increases to the discretion of management until 2026. Our members stood firm in our opposition to this attack on our members' wages and conditions because our members deserve better.

Unfortunately, the agreement was approved, although many of the issues the AWU raised with the agreement have come back to bite Gold Fields with a second vote required due to Gold Fields HR forgetting to update the expiry date on their copy and paste agreement.

YOU DESERVE BETTER

NATIONAL SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH

October was National Safety Awareness Month and the AWU began the month with a focus on safety in the Containers for Change industry. Our Organisers visited sites across WA to perform a safety audit and address their workplace safety concerns.

Our focus was then shifted to the tragic loss of life due to incidents in the Goldfields and Pilbara gold mines. One death is too many and two is simply unacceptable. AWU and WMWA organisers acted swiftly undertaking a 49(i) safety inspection on two sites. The AWU will continue to take part in these investigations and work with DMIRS, WorkSafe and the employers to get to the bottom of these incidents. The AWU will not stop until the broken safety culture in the mining industry is fixed.



UNION EBAS

UNION CHICKEN CONTINUES TO BE GOOD CHICKEN



Our Steggles members and delegates working with their Organiser, Suliman Ali have achieved some great improvements on their previous agreement. Workers at Steggles experience pay rates that are 20-50% higher than the award and this agreement secures pay increases up to 4% per year.

Not only does this agreement further increase our members' pay but it provides further protections for labour hire casual workers and ensures allowances are now paid on all annual leave.

CEMENTING AN EVEN BETTER AGREEMENT



Our members at Cockburn Cement aren't afraid of hard work and long hours.

This year's EBA was no different with COVID-19 interrupting negotiations and site access for meetings, meaning Cockburn Cement organiser Jeff Pratt had to meet with each crew individually to comply with COVID-19 procedures.

This did not stop them achieving a 4% pay increase and significantly improved overtime rates.

CLEANAWAY MEMBERS TAKE ACTION



AWU members at Cleanaway are celebrating their new agreement after protracted negotiations. Members at Cleanaway will receive pay increases of 3% over three years and all employees who have been with the company for more than five years will receive a travel allowance of \$44.50 per day.

A special thank you from their Organiser, Dan McCaig to the negotiation committee; Jake Pascoe, Rob Crinall, Karl Wadley, Phil Marson and Wayne Stanley for all your hard and long hours negotiating this new agreement.

“NO” TO KCGM TERMINATING AGREEMENTS



In November KCGM (Northern Star Resources) management informed its workforce of their intention to terminate the Mt Charlotte Underground Agreement. Once alerted, Goldfields Organiser Cate O'Keeffe and the WA Branch met with members and launched a "VOTE NO" campaign.

Northern Star was attempting to remove the agreement which underpinned our members' hard-fought union pay and conditions before the industrial laws changed. The termination was put out to vote, the results came back with an overwhelming "NO" vote recorded.

AWU MEMBERS DO IT ALL ROAD, FOOD, FIRES

BACKING OUR BUSH FIRE FIGHTERS



Our DBCA (bush firefighters) members work hard every day to keep us safe. They take great pride in expertly maintaining and operating their equipment. The State Government has attempted to undermine their efforts through the use of sub-standard contractors who regularly break and damage their equipment.

AWU members had enough and contacted the AWU legal team who have commenced proceedings to stop this privatisation by stealth. Our community's safety is too important for management to cut corners just to save a few bucks. The AWU will not stand by while our members' pay and conditions are eroded, by anyone.

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND - DM ROADS

While our Road Maintenance members are excited to move in-house at Main Roads, for many it will take some time to transition across. Our DM Roads members hadn't had a pay increase in over 12 months and wanted to reopen negotiations with their employer.

The employer said no, so AWU organiser Jeff Pratt said this wasn't good enough and began a majority support determination (MSD) to force DM Roads to the negotiation table. The MSD process has been successful and we look forward to negotiating with DM Roads to get our members the pay and conditions they deserve.



FEEDING WA AND IMPROVING WAGES



AWU members at Vesco Foods and the Mushroom Exchange in Perth's southern suburbs have negotiated new EBAs which will, once approved, significantly increase their pay and conditions.

Mushroom Exchange members are to receive a 5% pay increase over 3 years and Vesco Foods members will receive 4% over 3 years.

Not only do our Food Processing members feed WA but they keep our agricultural, retail and hospitality sectors alive. It pays to be AWU.

ON THE ROAD... AGAIN

THOUSANDS OF KILOMETRES, HUNDREDS OF HOURS AND COUNTLESS AWU MEMBERS VISITED.

It's no secret that the life of an AWU organiser is filled with long hours and countless long drives. Whether you are Dan McCaig driving to his Alcoa, Cleanaway or SRG sites or Andy Duffy and Willie Hope driving hours into the bright red yonder of the Pilbara or Andy Hacking and Jeff Pratt driving from Kwinana to Manjimup, down to Albany out to Lake Grace, Esperance, Geraldton and beyond or Catherine O'Keeffe travelling hundreds of kilometres to reach our hard-working members in the Goldfields.

Our AWU organisers have covered thousands of kilometres meeting with countless members about their EBAs, issues on site and major shake ups such as the Main Roads in-housing transition.

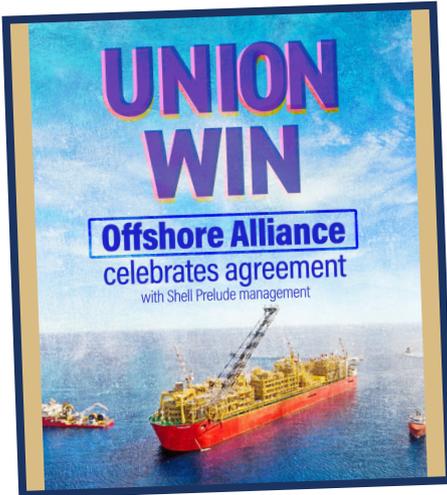
We've gathered some of the best pictures from their travels for the collage below. If you've got a photo of you and your workmates in regional WA, we'd love to see it, email them to admin@awuwa.asn.au.





OFFSHORE ALLIANCE

The Offshore Alliance is now 4 years old and continues to grow year on year. The Alliance is leading the way with strong industrial outcomes in the form of union-negotiated enterprise agreements and Alliance members taking protected industrial action in support of bargaining claims.



SHELL SHOCKED!

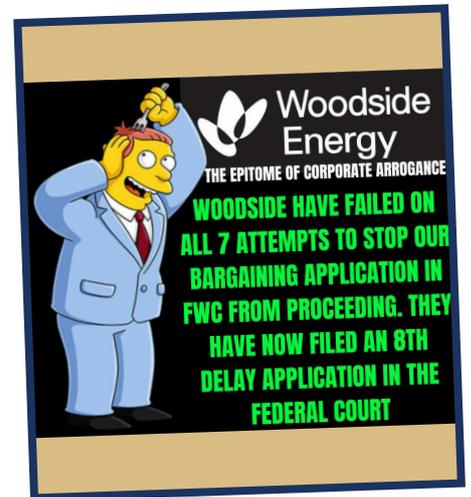
In September, Offshore Alliance members working on the Shell Prelude FPSO celebrated the end of 76 days of protected industrial action with 94% of the workforce voting up their new Union Agreement.

The campaign spanning from December 2021 until September 2022 cost Shell an estimated \$1.5 billion in lost production due to the actions of the belligerent employer. This campaign has shown what a united unionised workforce can achieve, further cementing the Offshore Alliance as the strongest union in offshore oil and gas.

WOODSIDE'S LEGAL WOES

Woodside continue their hostilities towards their workforce in refusing the AWU's Majority Support Determination (MSD) recognising the Alliance as the representatives of their workforce.

Woodside have sought to use every legal avenue at their disposal in order to not negotiate an agreement in good faith with their workforces. Woodside has now lost more than 7 attempts to delay, defeat, and frustrate the legal action the Offshore Alliance is taking to force Woodside to bargain with its workers and their union. The Offshore Alliance will spare no expense or effort in securing bargaining for its members.



CHEVRON MEMBERS FIGHT BACK

The Offshore Alliance is pressuring Chevron to provide a better deal to their Wheatstone and Gorgon workforce after earning over \$16.2 billion over 12 weeks between 1 July 2022 and 30 September 2022 off the back of their workforce's hard work.

Chevron's rates of pay and allowances are severely lacking behind industry standards and the Offshore Alliance will not settle for scraps. The Alliance won't cop the scraps as a substitute for an industry standard Enterprise Bargaining Agreement which includes secure permanent jobs, which can't be contracted out to labour hire.





WMWA

WESTERN MINE WORKERS' ALLIANCE FIGHTING FOR YOU

SAFETY IS UNION BUSINESS

Safety is union business and your union's #1 priority. In October we saw two deaths and more injured on mine sites in WA. Our WMWA organisers were immediately on the ground in Newman, supporting our members and undertaking 49(i) safety inspections on site.

One death is too many and the WA Mines Department must be proactive in its approach to safety so that workers can feel safe and ensure that there is no further loss of life in WA's mining industry. The WMWA will continue fighting to fix broken safety culture in mining to put workplace safety before production.



WMWA organisers on-site supporting workers at Karlawinda today



ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Thousands of WMWA members and workers across the WA mining industry were disappointed with the State Government's response to the Enough is Enough parliamentary report. The mining industry has a cultural problem, and we are now seeing employers using the backdrop of the report against our members rather than working with them.

The response from mining employers and the State Government has fallen short of workers and community expectations. Cheap PR stunts which will not make any meaningful change to the industry, such as hotlines or self-reporting through statutory declarations do not provide the long-term cultural change the mining industry needs. WMWA welcomes any real action designed to protect workers from sexual assault on site, but the current response does not go far enough for direct company accountability for their workforces.

TAKING ACTION AGAINST SILICA DUST

Silica Dust kills. We'd like to extend a special thank you to the WMWA members who attended our Silica Dust Pilbara meetings in November.

Exposure to silica dust can cause silicosis, cancers, COPD, and other horrific diseases and that's why the WMWA has been on the front foot to make Western Australian workplaces safer, with stronger protections for workers. Our partners Maurice Blackburn have put together a free fact sheet with info that you may need to know if you're exposed to silica dust at work, contact your WMWA organiser if you would like a copy.



NO ONE LEFT BEHIND



TIMBER INDUSTRY CLOSURE

The AWU continues to fight for our members in the Timber Industry who have been left high and dry by the State Government and after pushing them to reconsider, it has become clear that they will not be changing their mind. Since the announcement, the AWU has negotiated enhanced redundancy packages which will see affected Timber Workers receiving payments of \$31,000-\$45,000 from the State Government.

The WA Branch has remained steadfast in our commitment to supporting our members through organising an AWU Jobs Fair in conjunction with the Chamber of Minerals and Energy's Mining and Drilling companies and local townhall events for redundant workers. In May, 50 AWU members at the Greenbushes and Manjimup Timber Mills clocked off for the last time as Parkside Timber decided to close the Greenbushes Mill.

As soon as the AWU was informed of these closures our Timber Organiser, Andy Hacking leaped into action attending the Greenbushes and Manjimup Mills and contacting the State Government to ensure that local mine operator, Talison Lithium and South Regional TAFE Manjimup Campus received an invite to the Town Halls. Timber workers arrived guarded and sceptical of the town hall events but left with hope and tools to build a brighter future for themselves and their families.

DELEGATE AND HSR TRAINING

After successfully piloting our delegate training program last year the AWU expanded our delegate training to all sites across WA. This year we have had numerous delegates through our Perth office learning what it means to be an effective union delegate and leaving with the tools to best represent their fellow members on site.

The WA Branch is now also an accredited Health and Safety Representative (HSR) trainer. If you are a HSR at work and need to update or undertake HSR training - who better than your union, the AWU to train you on how to look out for your workmates? If you would like to attend AWU training rounds, please get in contact with your organiser.





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