



Stat Report 2019/34

In this issue of STAT Report we cover:

- Morrison's anti-worker union busting laws are back
- Union Round Up
- Victoria's Mental Health System Royal Commission
- Professional Indemnity and Psychology Board of Australia
- Holiday Close Down Period
- Campaign Corner
- Worth Reading
- Member Benefits

Morrison's anti-worker, union busting laws are back

The Senate has barely rejected the Morrison Government's anti-worker union busting legislation but it's back on the agenda for the Senate in the new year.

Less than a week after being rejected in the Senate, Scott Morrison has delivered on his promise to big business and put his union-busting bill through the House of Representatives again. But before it can be law it must go to the Senate. The Senate only just rejected this union busting bill but Morrison has rushed the same bill back into parliament.

These union-busting laws will hurt working people in this country. These laws will make it harder to win pay rises, harder to keep workplaces safe and they will make it easier for bad bosses to do the wrong thing; and keep getting away with doing the wrong thing. These laws continue a double standard that targets unions with deregistration over minor errors, like filing paperwork late, yet the big banks continue to get away with outrageous, ongoing criminal behaviour.

We have to stop this bill again. It doesn't matter what amendments have been made because nothing can save this bill or make it 'better'. At the end of the day this legislation is all about union-busting and keeping a promise to big business. What's clear from this legislation being put back on the Senate's agenda is that Scott Morrison has no plan to stop the criminality of the big banks. Our Prime Minister has no plan to end the rampant wage theft and has no intention of ending the rampant white-collar crime that is impacting Australians, making our workplaces less safe and keeping wages down.

Scott Morrison is only interested in attacking working people, through their union, again. And again. And again.

The Morrison Government has overseen raids on journalists and is now attacking working people's freedom to run their own unions. These are dangerous attacks on fundamental pillars of our democracy. To balance the power of corporations and governments, people need a free press and the right to form unions whose own democratic processes are free from interference. This extreme law would place Australia even further outside the rest of the world and more aligned with authoritarian, undemocratic countries.

These proposed laws also put the rights of millions of working people on the line. It is part of the Liberal Party's and big business' attempts to continually bully and intimidate unions because unions stand up for working people and hold governments and employers to account. At every turn we've had to fight for our rights and the gains that have been made. Governments and big business were never going to give workers annual leave or sick leave or maternity leave or safe workplaces or superannuation or many of the other things we now take for granted. But these laws will make it easier to undo these gains and wind back hard-won rights.

You don't have to be a union member to know that unions have a critical role to play in a healthy democracy. The Morrison Government continues to demonise unions and their members by suggesting that we're thugs. The truth is that the average union member is a 46-year-old woman who is a nurse. But the truth doesn't stop Morrison or his big business mates from demonising us.

And in typical fashion for Liberal Government's they have put it back on the agenda over Christmas limiting the amount of scrutiny of the bill and the Senators who say they're prepared to consider the changes. It is a frightening abuse of power and a shameful attempt to do over ordinary workers' during the summer holidays; it's hardly the "Christian" thing to do.

If these laws applied equally to corporations, we would see banks, multinational pizza chains and the restaurants of celebrity chefs closed down for repeatedly breaking workplace laws and their top executives sacked and heavily fined. As we know none of this has happened. The directors, senior managements and owners of these corporations are never penalised or brought to justice or banned.

Morrison's bill is entirely designed to silence working people and make it hard for all workers to win pay rises, protect their jobs, stop gendered-violence in the workplace, ensure workplaces are safe and fight rampant wage theft. In short what this Bill is designed to do is weaken unions and reduce our capacity to win benefits for members. It is an extreme piece of legislation that will make it easier for governments and businesses to attack unions; give bosses a say in who leads unions and who will represent members.

Senators will have the opportunity to again either stand up for your rights or deny them. And we won't be letting any Senator off the hook if they vote to take our rights away.

Help us defeat Morrison's union busting bill again. [Sign the petition](#) and then share it with your friends, family and colleagues

Paul Elliott
Secretary

Union Round Up

Monash Health – Biometric Data Dispute

The Union held meetings with members at Monash Health to discuss the outcome and the next steps. If you have any queries or concerns please contact Heidi on 9623 9623

Melbourne IVF

Not content with failing to properly negotiate with scientists for a new agreement, Melbourne IVF are now seeking to sack its senior scientists. Rather than seek to retain the substantial knowledge and skills of these senior scientists, Melbourne IVF thinks it'll save money by sacking them.

This is an interesting approach to their staffing issues given it is the scientists that deliver the results for the company. Without the scientists, including the senior scientists, Melbourne IVF is selling false hopes to, and could be misleading, couples wanting to start a family.

Melbourne Pathology

Members met to consider the latest offer from Melbourne Pathology. It is clear that the latest offer is completely unacceptable with management indicating that what they've offered would not come into effect until July 2020 with only 2.5% increase in wages each year over the life of the agreement. Clearly this is unacceptable and members were unequivocal in expressing their disappointment and disgust with the latest offer.

Victoria's Mental Health System Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System was established because there is widespread acknowledgment that mental health services have reached crisis point. The Commission has now delivered its interim report to the Victorian Government, which has committed to implementing all recommendations made by the Commission.

The interim report includes some initial recommendations, which are an important first step, not an attempt to address the significant systemic issues highlighted to the Commission so far. The Commission won't be calling for formal submissions on the interim report. The Commission will then deliver a final report in October 2020, which is expected to present "a bold and innovative approach for transforming Victoria's mental health system".

Read the full interim report and a summary at rcvmhs.vic.gov.au/interim-report

Initial recommendations from the interim report:

- Our recommendations to address immediate challenges include:
- a new approach to mental health investment, to ensure a substantial increase – not just now but into the future
- the creation of a Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing to bring together different skills and expertise to drive better mental health outcomes for all Victorians
- an additional 170 acute mental health beds for young people and adults to help address critical pressures in areas of need
- expanding the Hospital Outreach Post-suicidal Engagement (HOPE) program into all area mental health services and providing recurrent funding for the program, to increase the availability of support and outreach for Victorians following an attempted suicide
- expanding culturally safe services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the creation of an Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Centre. This will support the right to Aboriginal self-determination, by ensuring Aboriginal communities design and deliver their own mental health services
- establishing Victoria's first residential mental health service designed and delivered by people with lived experience of mental illness
- expanding consumer and carer/family lived experience workforces through a work program co-produced with people with lived experience
- providing more training and recruitment pathways to boost the number of graduate nurses and allied health professionals in public mental health services – an additional 180 staff annually
- establishing a Mental Health Implementation Office to start work on delivering these recommendations

Formal submissions have now been published on the Commission website and [you can read them here](#).

Professional Indemnity and Psychology Board of Australia

The VPA provides members with Professional Indemnity insurance cover for all work wherever they are employed as psychologist or on psychological work. The cover does not cover private practice. The cover also includes representation at the Coroner's Court and other proceedings and notifications to AHPRA. The PI insurance cover is compliant with the Psychology Board of Australia (PBA) standard.

The PBA standard requires cover provided by a third party – in this case the VPA – to comply with the standard. The requirements include adequate and appropriate civil liability cover; appropriate retroactive cover for otherwise uncovered matters arising from prior practice; automatic reinstatement, or an equivalent approach which ensures that the amount of cover will not be exhausted by a single claim

The VPA cover complies with the standard. The cover is for \$10,000 for any one claim and automatic reinstatement.

Members are reminded that they are required to notify the VPA/insurer of any matters that may potentially give rise to a claim. [The VPA has a notification form expressly for this purpose.](#)

It is important to note that the cover applies to financial members of the VPA only. Cover ceases when a member resigns from the VPA (or is removed as a member due to unfinanciality) unless the resignation is on account of no longer practicing or being employed as a psychologist.

Holiday Close Down Period

The Union will close for summer holidays on 23 December 2019 and reopen on 6 January 2020. However, if you're facing disciplinary action or you've been sacked please contact the Office on 0418 543 682.

All other queries will be dealt with upon returning to work on 6 January 2020.



Positions not backfilled? Let us know

Psychologists: If you need help at work you need the VPA Inc.

If you are a psychologist and not in the VPA, you are taking unnecessary risks with your reputation and career. [Download an application form and join today.](#)

Common beaches of employment entitlements and negotiation of enterprise agreements

The VPA routinely assists members over issues such as harassment and bullying, under classification, organisational re-structuring, incorrect calculation of leave entitlements and health and safety. In addition, it negotiates enterprise agreements for psychologists in the public and private sectors to ensure that rates of pay and conditions remain up to date.

Support the Healthy Futures campaign



The Union strongly believes that climate change is union business. We know that climate change threatens our health by increasing the risks of heatwaves, bushfires, droughts and storms, displacing people and straining our health systems.

oil and gas.

And right now HESTA and First State Super (FSS), Australia's biggest health industry super funds, are investing our money in fossil fuels - coal,

Join us in asking HESTA and FSS to divest from fossil fuels at www.healthyfutures.net.au/divest.

Stopping Gendered Violence at Work

Far too often women are attacked, harassed and threatened in their workplaces. And it needs to stop. That's why the Union is fighting back against gendered violence in the workplace – it's a very serious occupational health and safety issue.

Gendered violence is like a disease in our workplaces. Working women's experience of violence at work indicates that the problem of gendered violence is endemic in our workplaces.

Sign up to support the campaign at: <http://www.unionwomen.org.au/stopgv>

Do you need access to Domestic Violence services?

If you're experiencing domestic violence and need help, here is a list of Victorian services which may be able to assist you.

[Safe Steps \(formerly Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria\)](#)

[Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria \(FVPLS\)](#)

[Centre Against Sexual Assault \(CASA\) Forum](#)

[Community Legal Centres](#)

[Court Network](#)

[Domestic Violence Victoria](#)

[Elder Rights Advocacy \(ERA\)](#)

[Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service](#)

[inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence](#)

[Men's Referral Service](#)

[No To Violence](#)

[QLife Australia](#)

[Seniors Rights Victoria \(SRV\)](#)

[The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence](#)

[Victoria Legal Aid \(VLA\)](#)

[Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency](#)

[Women with Disabilities Victoria \(WDV\)](#)

[Women's Housing Ltd](#)

[Women's Information Referral Exchange \(WIRE\)](#)

[Women's Legal Service](#)

[Women's refuges](#)

Worth Reading: Superannuation members increasingly want to see their money chasing good things

"Super fund members increasingly want their investments have positive environmental and social outcomes, new research has shown.

A survey by financial house Franklin Templeton found that overall 88 per cent of fund members valued positive environmental, social and governance (ESG) objectives in superannuation.

In fact, 44 per cent of Baby Boomers, 36 per cent of Gen Xers and 34 per cent of Gen Yers surveyed said that ESG issues were very important to them.

There are two common types of ESG investment 'overlays' – negative and positive."

Read the entire article by Rod Myer in The New Daily at:

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/superannuation/2019/12/05/super-members-want-environmental-good/>

Worth Reading: Union-busting laws back before Parliament

"Union-busting legislation is being reintroduced to Parliament less than a week after the bill was defeated in the Senate.

Attorney-General Christian Porter is gearing up for a fresh round of consultation with crossbench senators.

He is prepared to make further amendments to win their support.

"Since the bill was voted on last week in the Senate, issues have been raised which were not raised with the government during consultations on the bill," Mr Porter said on Wednesday.

Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese said even with further changes, the bill would still represent an attack on ordinary workers.

"The fact is this is not in the interests of working people," he told ABC radio.

"Every time this government sees a nurse or sees a teacher, what they see is a trade unionist who they deride as being a thug."

Read the entire article in The New Daily at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/12/04/union-busting-laws-back-before-parliament/>

Worth Reading: To really fix Victoria's mental health system, we'll need to bridge the state/Commonwealth divide

"After several months of hearings, and many [harrowing stories](#) painting a picture of a system in dire need of reform, the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System has today released its [interim report](#).

The report contains a number of recommendations as to how the state should go about improving its approach to mental health care.

These include providing additional hospital beds, boosting the mental health workforce, increasing supports for people who have attempted suicide, and creating a dedicated Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Centre. The commissioners have also recommended Victorians pay a new tax to enable increased funding for mental health.

Each of these recommendations responds to pressing problems, including [difficulties in accessing services](#) (even for people with severe mental health problems), a high [suicide rate](#) among people in contact with services, and the [greater prevalence](#) of mental health problems among Aboriginal Victorians compared to Victorians overall."

Read the entire article by Anthony Jorm in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/to-really-fix-victorias-mental-health-system-well-need-to-bridge-the-state-commonwealth-divide-127993>

Worth Reading: One-third of big companies pay no tax, ATO data reveals

"Almost a third of Australia's biggest companies paid no tax last year, despite soaring commodity prices driving the overall take up by \$6.6 billion.

The Australian Taxation Office's tax transparency report looked at more than 2200 Australian and foreign-owned companies with turnover above \$100 million.

More than 1500 of the companies paid a combined total of \$52.3 billion in tax, while 710 firms didn't have a tax liability in 2017/18.

Paying minimal or zero tax can be a result of companies making a loss, utilising losses from other years or having projects in start-up phase."

Read the entire article in The New Daily at: <https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/news-federal-budget/2019/12/12/companies-no-tax-australia/>

Worth Reading: Unlawful metadata access is easy when we're flogging a dead law

"After watching this year's [media raids](#) and the prosecution of [lawyers and whistleblowers](#), it's not hard to see why Australians wonder about excessive police power and dwindling journalistic freedom.

But these problems are compounded by another, less known issue: police, and other bodies not even involved in law enforcement, have broad powers to access metadata. Each year, police alone access metadata in excess of [300,000](#) times.

Metadata has been [described](#) as an “activity log”: it’s the information that allows a communication to occur. Once, this would have been the address on the envelope. But modern telecommunications metadata consists of the time, date, duration, locations of a connection and more.

This year, fresh evidence revealed police accessed the metadata of [journalists and 3,365 telecommunications users](#) unlawfully.

And local governments and professional bodies – which were [explicitly denied access](#) to metadata in [2015](#) – have been accessing the same data under different [legislation](#)."

Read the entire article by Genna Churches and Monkia Zalnieriute in The Conversation at: <https://theconversation.com/unlawful-metadata-access-is-easy-when-were-flogging-a-dead-law-127621>

Join the Union

Are your workloads increasing? Are your stress levels increasing? Join the Union today!

To protect our professions we must strengthen our collective voice by increasing our membership. You can help by sharing one of the images below on Facebook.



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Your Union is on Facebook

Keep up to date with what's happening by liking us on Facebook

[Medical Scientists Association of Victoria](#) | [Victorian Psychologists Association Inc](#) | [Association of Hospital Pharmacists](#)

Australian Unions Member Benefits app

As a Union member you get access to exclusive Member Benefits. The program has expanded to include:

- Discounted movie tickets for Village, Hoyts, Palace and Event cinemas.
- Discounted electronic gift cards including major theme parks, zoos and aquariums.
- A discounted accommodation booking site.
- A new secure member only website and smart phone app.

All this is free to all members of affiliated unions – that means you! If you have not got a login and would like join in [register for Member Benefits now.](#)



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