

## **Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015**

The Queensland Council of Unions supports the Bill that contains two major proposals concerning Labour Day and High Risk Work Licences. Our brief submission is as follows:

### **Labour Day**

The Queensland Council of Unions supports the proposition to move Labour Day back to its rightful place – in May. Moreover, this move is consistent with an election promise made by the then Opposition Leader Annastacia Palaszczuk.

Queenslanders have always celebrated Labour Day in May, despite the Newman Government moving the public holiday to October. Changing the Labour Day public holiday was a petty vindictive decision and pay-back for the union movement's opposition to job cuts and for reflecting the wider concerns of the community. The case was never made out as to why such retribution was necessary.

The Newman government had no regard for Labour Day's special place in Queensland history. The first May Day march was held in 1891 during the Shearer's strike in Barcaldine. The first Monday in May was chosen in 1901 when it was proclaimed a public holiday.

Labour Day recognises the vast majority of the community who go about their jobs with little or no recognition. It also demonstrates the power that labour (with a u) holds and the contribution that ordinary workers make to society and the economy.

Labour Day celebrates the achievements of workers within, and for, their community. It's a time to recognise how this progress has benefited Australian society as a whole. Ticking off achievements like the 8 hour day is satisfying but there remains much hard work ahead together to ensure we continue to live in a civil society.

### **High Risk Work Licences**

The Bill also proposes the implementation of an online application service for high risk work (HRW) licences using electronic identity verification. There is no opposition to this aspect of the Bill and it would appear to be advantageous to government, employers and the employees holding the licence.

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