

FIGHTING ADMINISTRATION

Updates

Esther: The organiser sacked by the Administrator had a conciliation meeting with administration's legal team that went nowhere. Case to be filed before the federal court.

Federal Court Case: At this time it is in the hands of the judges. We could hear from them as early as this month, or not until June, or later. No matter what, we need to have a plan of action for whichever way the court decides. Join the conversation by following the QR code on the back of this bulletin.

Administration: Travis O'Brien, the Administration appointed Executive Director of the QLD/NT Branch has resigned suddenly. No reason has been given.

Fatalities: Queensland has seen 3 fatalities since the election of the Liberal state government. A traffic controller was killed in regional Victoria in January. Our hearts go out to their loved ones. Mourn for the dead, fight like hell for the living!

Manufacturing Division Voting to leave CFMEU, Opal Workers Locked Out

By Sue Bull, CFMEU Retired Member

The Fair Work Commission, on January 23, granted the Manufacturing Division the right to ballot its members on demerging. It will happen between February 24 and April 14.

Amelia, an apprentice fabricator and DUDC member said that manufacturing members would be better serviced and have a stronger union if they stayed within the amalgamated CFMEU: "Come together as rank and file members and support each other through our struggles."

Michael O'Connor, the CFMEU's Manufacturing Division National Secretary, wants out, saying last October there was no benefit for his members to stay in. He pointed to the still unproven corruption allegations against the Construction Division, saying: "We are a union of honest, hardworking unionists who deserve better than being associated with the CFMEU Construction Division."

Meanwhile, O'Connor himself is facing corruption charges in the Federal Court, brought by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA). APRA claims that

O'Connor failed to "act honestly" and did not exercise the "care, skill and diligence" expected of a superfund director.

Your Union — Your Choice reported a leaked directive last year from Michael Flinn, Deputy Chief of Staff for the CFMEU Administrator, which banned construction organisers from contact with Manufacturing Division members.

"The demerger proposal is an attempt to halt Manufacturing Division members from joining the Construction Division which is more capable of winning higher wages and better health and safety conditions," Tim Gooden from Defend the Union – Defend the CFMEU told Green Left.



Meanwhile, on January 16, 300 pulp and paper mill workers in the Latrobe Valley, members of the CFMEU's Manufacturing Division, have been locked out of Nippon Paper Group's Opal paper mill in Morwell.

Enterprise bargaining negotiations broke down as Opal claimed that the loss of wood supplies from VicForests and the terms and conditions from previous EBAs "were no longer relevant in a more competitive market". It ended the negotiations. According to Anthony Pavey, CFMEU Maryvale sub-branch secretary, the workers were locked out with only one hour's notice, after seven operators took a protected action stop-work for six hours. Pavey said Opal "want to talk about clauses that strip away all our rights and allow them to dictate terms at the drop of the hat".

The paper mill is the biggest employer in Morwell and the lock-out could have a disastrous impact on a region already hard hit by industry shutdowns and cost-of-living rises.

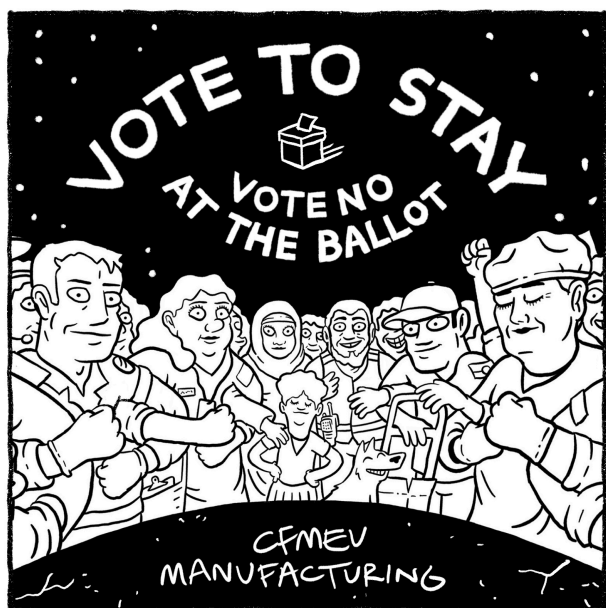
DUDC raised \$1300 for the Opal Workers' strike fund. Dustin Heard and 2 other construction workers from

DUDC visited the locked-out workers on January 28, and said they appreciated the solidarity and donation.

Dustin and others spoke about the plight of the locked-out workers and their solidarity donation on the CFMEU Manufacturing Facebook page and were promptly blocked.

"The Manufacturing Division of the CFMEU seems to be using this Opal dispute to build support for the demerger by denigrating the Construction Division," said Gooden. "Union solidarity across unions will be necessary if workers are to win the paper mill dispute," he said.

(Originally published in Green Left Weekly, as "Behind the push to demerge manufacturing division from CFMEU", edited for length and clarity.)



Where's my vote?!

The ALP and the Manufacturing Division are scheming to rob you of your voice in the upcoming vote about the future of the Manufacturing Division of the CFMEU. If Manufacturing leaves the CFMEU, your membership may go with them! If the outcome of the vote is going to affect your union coverage, you deserve to have a say in that outcome.

If you are a:

- Glazier or other glass worker
- Window trades worker
- Cabinet maker
- Furnishing trades worker
- Facade trades worker
- Flooring and carpeting trades worker

...give the Fair Work Commission a call at 1300 799 675 and ask about your vote. Here is an example of what you might say:

"Hi, I'd like to speak to someone about the ballot for the Manufacturing Division to leave the CFMEU. The ballot order number is D2024/10.

I'm currently a member of the CFMEU and I have not been included in the vote. I may be forced to leave the only union that represents me and go in to another union that I have never been represented by or met an official from... I think this vote shouldn't go ahead unless everyone that is involved in their coverage gets their fair say and a vote."

If you have any issues or want to get involved in the campaign to keep our union together, even if you're not one of the trades listed, follow the QR at the bottom of this page to join fellow CFMEU members in the fight to keep us strong and united.

Delegates Call on CBUS to Divest from Murder

CBUS attended the 14th November delegates meeting to discuss the current news and investments of the fund. Chief investment officer Brett Chatfield gave a talk of where the fund is up to and current investments. It is near a new record of \$100 billion dollars in members' money and has had solid growth over the last 12 months.

A delegate asked Brett why members' money is being invested in the manufacture and supply of weapons of war, especially when earlier in the year the CFMEU had asked them to divest from companies like Lockheed Martin and Raytheon. The delegate explained that he doesn't believe members would their money invested in murder and asked if CBUS would listen to a resolution of the delegates meeting to divest.

A CBUS board member that was present argued that other superannuation funds invest in those weapons companies, and that CBUS Board seats were made up mostly of company and industry representatives rather than union representatives, so even if the unions want to divest it is not a majority of the Board. The delegate stated that, though it is true the board is heavily on the bosses' side of capital, the superannuation fund is workers' money and we should have the final say in what our money is used for.

During General Business delegates passed the below resolution:

"That this delegates meeting moves that a little bit of murder is still too much and, even if CBUS is our fund, that 1 murder is 1 too many, that there are better and more ethical investments, and CBUS should divest from those investments of war profiteering."

Get involved with Defend the Unions - Defend the CFMEU!
Follow the QR code here:

