



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY : MORE POWERFUL TOGETHER

On International Women's Day, IEU members call upon employers and governments to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

Everyone deserves to be safe at work and in their community. Yet the rates of sexual harassment in Australia are alarming, particularly for women, with 85% having experienced it in their lifetime.

Sexual harassment is about more than just individual behaviour.

It is a problem that is deeply entrenched within our society and occurs because gender inequality is ingrained in our social and cultural norms, structures and practices.

Sexual harassment causes significant harm to individuals, workplaces and society.

IEU members know what the solutions are, but we need governments and employers to implement them.

We need strong action to Change the Rules so that we can prevent and respond to sexual harassment.

And we need it now!.

Australian Human Rights Commission National Inquiry Into Workplace Sexual Harassment

Last year, the AHRC launched an independent national inquiry into sexual harassment in the workplace. This 12 month investigation led by Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins aims to highlight a much needed light on a system which is failing Australian workers, particularly women and provide individuals and organisations from all over Australia with opportunities to speak about their experiences.

More Powerful Together: End Sexual Harassment.

The IEU has actively supported the ACTU submission to the AHRC inquiry and will continue to support national action to highlight the incidences of sexual harassment in the workforce. IEU members join with other unions and organisations across Australia to call on State, Territory and Federal Governments to take urgent and coordinated action to implement the following solutions.

- 1. Dedicated prevention efforts** to address the underlying gendered drivers of sexual harassment, which should be part of a holistic strategy to prevent violence against women and promote gender equality in line with *Change The Story: A Shared Framework For The Primary Prevention Of Violence Against Women And Their Children In Australia.*¹
- 2. Stronger and clearer legal duties** on employers to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment at work, and strong and effective regulators that have the full suite of regulatory tools and resources necessary to effectively tackle sexual harassment, including as a cultural, a systemic and a health and safety issue.
- 3. Access to fair, effective and efficient complaints processes**, including a new right of action under the Fair Work Act, extended time limits, increased transparency of conciliation outcomes where appropriate, and other amendments and resources necessary to address the unique barriers that currently prevent workers who experience sexual harassment from taking effective legal action.
- 4. Appropriate advocacy and support** for workers who experience sexual harassment, including access to information, counselling and legal services that are appropriately resourced and coordinated.
- 5. Accessible reporting tools**, including piloting an online reporting tool that assists people to report and address problem behaviour and seek support, and identifies trends to assist with prevention and enforcement efforts.

Australian workers need access to fair, effective and efficient laws , support and processes which prevent and protect against sexual harassment at work

On International Women's Day, IEU members say CHANGE THE RULES and ensure our workplaces are FREE FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT

¹ Our Watch. Australian Research Organisation for Women's Safety and VictHealth (2015)

IEU – representing 75000 teachers, principals and ancillary staff in faith based, community and independent schools, pre-schools and early childhood centres and post secondary centres across Australia. March 2019