



SA UNIONS

Building our future

**An Agenda for
South Australia.**

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An Agenda for South Australia.

Building our future

South Australia is on the cusp of economic and social change. Our economy is transforming from its traditional base of agriculture and manufacturing to one driven by mining and defence, with significant growth in education and community services. We are in a prime position to capitalise on the continued economic growth of our Asian neighbours and the rise in demand for our goods.

We are facing the challenges of climate change, which will impact on us more than other places in our nation as we live on the edge of a desert and at the end of the River Murray. The need for new technology and the emerging green economy could provide job opportunities for our people into the future.

We need to work together and generate creative solutions if we are to deal with an ageing population, increased migration and the future of our small economy in light of global financial pressures.

Unions in South Australia have a pivotal role in ensuring that the economic benefits of booming new industries benefit the state's workers, their families and our communities well into the future.

We can assist in the development of our state as a socially just, productive and economically sustainable community by having an active involvement in policy, strategies and projects that will address the challenges of the future, such as labour and skill shortages, climate change and social inclusion.

We can harness the wisdom, experience and skills in communities to identify local issues and solutions. By refocussing and aligning the resources of government, community organisations and philanthropic and corporate bodies to implement these local solutions, we can bring about real and sustainable results in communities.

There is growing international, interstate and local evidence about the effectiveness of community-driven, collective approaches in bringing about change. SA Unions is a founding partner of Together SA and we look forward to working across South Australia as part of this alliance to ensure the best possible community engagement which brings about the best possible solutions to the issues our state faces now and into the future.

This is a union agenda for South Australia. It contains key goals, recommendations and initiatives. The challenge for us all is how the future of the state can be fairly shared with its people in a sustainable environment.



Jamie Newlyn
President SA Unions

Our mission and values

Our vision

Our vision is for a just South Australia with safe and fair working conditions and a strong, sustainable economy that supports families, communities and the environment and creates a strong future for all.

We value

Collectivism

Justice

The inherent dignity of workers

Equity and tolerance

Democracy

We will continue the fight

For strong independent unions as a vital part of an effective democracy

For fair and just societies here and throughout the world, to create communities which value human worth, foster collectivity and provide for a fair distribution of wealth

To help create active engaged communities, in which people have their say and participate in decision-making processes

For workers to organise together for improved rights and living standards for themselves, their families and their communities

To be a voice for working people and a balance to the power and influence of business interests

To help create a strong and sustainable economy for South Australia, balanced with the need for a sustainable environment

To respect Aboriginal people by acknowledging their ownership and on-going relationship with their land, the importance of their culture, language, law and ceremony and the need for genuine economic and social opportunities for Aboriginal people and their communities



**Strong unions supporting
working people and
contributing positively
to the future of our state.**

Meeting the challenges ahead

Our goals for South Australia

Fair, safe working conditions and decent wages for all

Strong unions supporting working people and contributing positively to the future of our state

A fair share of the wealth created by the state's mining expansion

Secure, long-term jobs

A strong education and training system and a more highly skilled workforce so people are prepared for the jobs of the future

A focus on developing skills and creating jobs for local people, not importing skills through temporary visa arrangements

Fair treatment of workers from other countries

A place in which Aboriginal people share the economic opportunities and jobs in our community

A state in which corporations are required to be good corporate citizens, operate in the interests of all South Australians and give back to the community

Infrastructure investment that builds our economy and supports our community

A place which allows people to have a balance between life and work

A valued public sector providing high quality services

Meeting the challenges ahead

1 A strong union movement Crucial to a democracy

Strong, independent and democratic unions are crucial to our democracy. Where workers are organised in strong unions, they earn higher wages, have fairer and safer workplaces, better working conditions and a collective voice to negotiate with employers. The working conditions people enjoy today are the legacy of the activities of unions and the sacrifices made by generations of union members during the past century.

As well as helping members in their workplaces, unions actively campaign to improve conditions for working people and their families. Unions, both as individual organisations and as part of the wider trade union movement, campaign on the issues that affect working people every day. Unions fight for the creation of more secure jobs, decent pay, fairer hours of work, improved health and safety laws, better work and family balance, fairer workers' compensation and many other employment conditions.

The union movement has made a significant contribution to the development of South Australia's reputation as a national leader in many areas of social and economic reform.

Unions have been at the forefront of struggles to improve and protect education, health and other services for our community. Unions fight budget cuts, protect penalty rates, expose harsh laws and fight for local jobs. Unions also demand increased investment in infrastructure and new industrial development which supports local companies, content and the development of the local workforce.

By fighting for better wages and conditions for working people, unions help them keep up with cost of living pressures, made more difficult for people on low wages and in insecure jobs. Unions also support people in need by lobbying to improve pensions and pursuing cases to improve the minimum wage.

A strong union movement is an important balance to powerful vested interests in our community and can ensure that important issues, such as the impact of globalisation on South Australian workers, are not ignored.

Through their unions, working people improve their workplaces, add value to their industries, engage in their communities and help build the future of South Australia.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Federal and state governments should recognise the important role of trade unions and the right of workers to join and actively participate in their unions
- Elected workplace delegates should be provided with support to do their job and to attend union training
- Unions should be consulted about key policy areas for the state
- Union representatives should be included on key boards and bodies so workers' voices can be considered in decision-making
- The collective experience and wisdom of working people should be respected and consulted
- Working people should have the right to have a say about their working conditions
- The rights of people to raise issues of work and safety in their workplaces should be protected through a strong system of health and safety representatives
- Workers in new and emerging industries should have the right to collectively bargain and be represented by trade unions



**Unions fight budget cuts,
protect penalty rates,
expose harsh laws and
fight for local jobs.**

Meeting the challenges ahead

2 Fair, safe and secure work Building a productive and engaged workforce

For more than a century, unions have campaigned for better rights for working people. This has been achieved by balanced and fair laws which govern the entitlements and protections of working people. We have delivered protection for the vulnerable, social cohesion and improved equity for the people of our state and our nation. Union collective bargaining has delivered significantly improved productivity and engagement of workers in their workplaces.

There are groups in our community, such as young people, newly arrived workers and those in insecure work, who are more vulnerable and need special protection under the law to protect them from exploitation.



WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- The continuation of a state industrial relations system for the public sector and other areas not adequately covered by federal law
- Guarantees that the state government won't legislate away the rights and conditions of public sector workers
- High quality programs in schools including learning about rights at work and the role of trade unions
- Legislation for special protection of young workers under state law by introducing Child Labour Laws in South Australia
- All new workers arriving in this state should be employed under the same conditions as local workers and should understand their rights and have access to union membership
- High rates of casualisation in the state and national economies should be addressed
- The ACTU's push for changes to the Fair Work Act to allow for workers to have better contact with their union and to allow arbitration to be used when bargaining reaches stalemate
- Stronger legislation and inspection to ensure young people are not exploited through the growing use of trial shifts and unpaid work
- Substantially increased pay for hundreds of thousands of apprentices to provide them with a living wage and to stop the disturbing apprentice drop-out rate in Australia

Insecure Work

Quality secure jobs are the key to a shared national prosperity but 40% of Australians have no job security. They are employed in insecure work, such as casual work, fixed-term work, contracting or labour hire. That means low pay, no holiday pay or sick leave, no access to training, and higher risks of occupational illnesses and injury.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- The conversion of casual employment to permanent employment after periods of consistent work
- A reduction in temporary and casual employment in the state public sector and a commitment to future job security for all public sector workers
- All workers should have a say about how, where, and when they work, and to be consulted about change, regardless of their employment status
- All workers in insecure employment should have access to important conditions like annual leave, paid sick leave, overtime, penalty rates and long service leave through portable leave schemes so people can accrue entitlements from job to job
- Casual workers should have access to quality skills and training, and career opportunities
- An independent inquiry into the Labour Hire industry in South Australia focusing particularly on workers safety and industrial entitlements

23.9% or 2.2m workers (one fifth of the total workforce) are in casual employment.

More than one million Australians are independent contractors.

35% of casual workers are in jobs where hours varied weekly.

We met countless casual workers in low-paying industries like security, contract cleaning, call-centres, child care, the horticultural industry and food processing. In each of these industries we heard variations of the same story – workers facing unstable and variable incomes and working hours, pay so low that many of them have to hold down two or three jobs to make ends meet, little or no access to paid leave, little or no voice at work about wages, conditions or work organisation, and uncertainty over how long they'll continue to have work.

Lives on Hold: Unlocking the potential of Australia's workforce, The Report of the Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work in Australia, ACTU, 2012:18

Meeting the challenges ahead

A strong safety regime

At the end of a work day, every worker should expect that they can come home safely to their families. Improved Work Health and Safety is not only critical to an individual worker's life, but is also critical to increased productivity and the future of our state.

In the immediate future, jobs growth in South Australia will be occurring in the more dangerous and remote industries and in forms of work which requires travel and where workers work outside a workplace, in homes and the community. This calls for a stronger, more targeted focus on safety if we are to prevent injury and death.

Young workers starting out in the workforce and new arrivals to our state are most likely to be injured at work and need special attention.

The nature of South Australia's housing stock and building development means that we have a very high incidence of asbestos use. Levels of asbestos disease, such as mesothelioma, are growing as the third wave of asbestos disease from workplace exposure and home renovation takes hold. This makes asbestos a key issue for South Australia.

Daniel was a second year apprentice carpenter. He was injured at work when a tool fell on his foot. Daniel went to hospital but did not make a WorkCover claim because he was told that a claim would affect his future employment prospects. Daniel took some time off work to recover from his injury. Later Daniel discovered that he was losing his hearing due to the industrial noise he was exposed to at work. The next week Daniel's boss tried to dismiss Daniel saying he was costing the business too much money.

Young Workers Legal Service Annual Report 2011/2012

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- A zero workplace injury and death target for the state
- The election of health and safety reps, democratically elected by their workgroup, to be compulsory in all workplaces
- Improvements to the quality and operation of the Work, Health and Safety inspectorate at Safework SA, including the establishment of specialised teams who will focus on dangerous, remote, new and expanding industries
- Funding for a major media campaign to make people aware of the dangers of asbestos
- State funding for the national plan for the removal of asbestos in the community
- Stricter enforcement surrounding the safe removal and disposal of asbestos
- An increase in the number of places people can legally dispose of asbestos to stop illegal dumping and reduce the cost of dumping for the community
- Victims of workplace injury and their families are well looked after and given access to justice
- A system of on-the spot fines for breaches of WHS laws
- A statewide strategy to ensure young people are safe at work



Fair treatment of injured workers

South Australians who are injured at work deserve to be treated fairly, and with compassion and understanding and assisted to recover and return to work. Any review of Workcover must tackle the fact that our state has the worst return to work rate in the country and that our system still victimises injured workers.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- The reinstatement of fairness in the worker's compensation system with a renewed focus on returning people to decent work and treating them with dignity
- A strengthening and enforcement of obligations on employers to care for and employ injured workers
- An investment in retraining for injured workers
- A system which gives workers with the ability to pursue their employers for negligence

An active and valued public sector

The challenges facing our state require an effective and professional public sector workforce.

The public service ensures the delivery of essential and high quality services to the public including health and education as well as major infrastructure and innovation projects that underpin future economic development.

They are the key to ensuring that the wealth is shared and social and community issues are addressed through effective policy and action.

Public sector workers implement government policy and as such, should be appropriately valued, recognised and resourced to do so. As an employer, the government should engage their expertise and recognise their contribution in positive ways and be a model employer for the state. We need to revalue the importance of frank and fearless advice from public servants so we get the best informed and considered decisions from government.

Public services, whether they be schools, hospitals, TAFE colleges, universities, transport or emergency and community services set the high standard and quality the public demand as well as providing an important safety net for those who are the most needy in our community. This requires them to be adequately funded and supported.

Austerity policies, cost cutting, privatisation, outsourcing and job cuts are short term, narrow and damaging policies that break down both the quality and safety net, leaving the public at risk.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Promotion of the important role of the public sector to the operation of our state including opposing outsourcing and privatisation of government services and providing the resources necessary to provide high quality public services to the community, including in regional areas
- Actively engaging workers and their unions in open discussion about public sector reform
- A continued commitment to job security in the public sector in order to ensure independence and retention of expertise
- Renewal and rejuvenation of the public sector in a way that promotes diversity, celebrates the work and encourages young people to see it as a valuable career choice
- The public service as the employer of choice and the state leader in training and development, working conditions and wages
- Public sector workers having the same rights as other workers to collectively bargain and be active union members
- Addressing the interstate migration and skill shortage of professionally qualified public sector workers through nationally competitive salaries and other incentives

Meeting the challenges ahead

Work and life

As our economy changes and our population grows, we need to support existing workers and their families and increase their involvement in the workforce, particularly women.

To do this, we need to address the issue of balancing the competing demands of work and life. We will have an edge in a competitive labour market if we value and support workers to engage in community life, volunteer and spend time with their families.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Improvements to the national paid parental leave scheme so parents can spend more time at home with their children and do not miss out on their superannuation payments while they are on leave
- An enforceable right for part-time work, both for parents returning to the workforce and for others with caring responsibilities
- Given the high incidence of insecure work in South Australia, a focus on policies and actions that increase the proportion of secure employment for our state so workers can take regular holidays with their families and more effectively plan their lives
- Work flexibility for people who are making the transition to retirement
- Chief Executives in the public sector to report annually on the take up of flexible work conditions
- High quality affordable, well-funded childcare for South Australian families

Cost of living

The landmark Australian labour law decision on minimum wages was handed down in 1907 and still has relevance today. In the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, Justice Higgins found that a company was obliged to pay his employees a wage that met:

"the normal needs of an average employee, regarded as a human being in a civilised community", regardless of his capacity to pay."

His decision created Australia's basic wage. He ruled that remuneration *"must be enough to support the wage earner in reasonable and frugal comfort."*

Higgins' decision was ground breaking but was made at a time when men had jobs for life, women weren't encouraged to enter the workforce, and wages were centrally determined.

In the 21st century, with a high level of insecure employment, casualisation, offshoring and outsourcing, the swinging door of welfare-work-welfare, the constant movement of people in and out of jobs, we need a new focus on job security and decent wages. In a state with an ageing population, the issue of adequacy of superannuation will become a major challenge as people retire. This will hit women and low income people hardest.

These conditions are creating a situation in which low-paid working people are struggling with the increasing cost of living.

While most working South Australians enjoy a high standard of living, there are growing numbers of people in our community who are struggling to make ends meet. Those in low wages, in insecure work, the unemployed, people with disabilities and mental health issues, those affected by domestic violence, and pensioners.

Women, even in those in full-time jobs, struggle with wages inequality. The South Australian gender pay gap is the third highest in the nation. If women's traditional work is not better valued and if women remain excluded from the higher paid jobs in defence and mining, this disparity will only get worse.

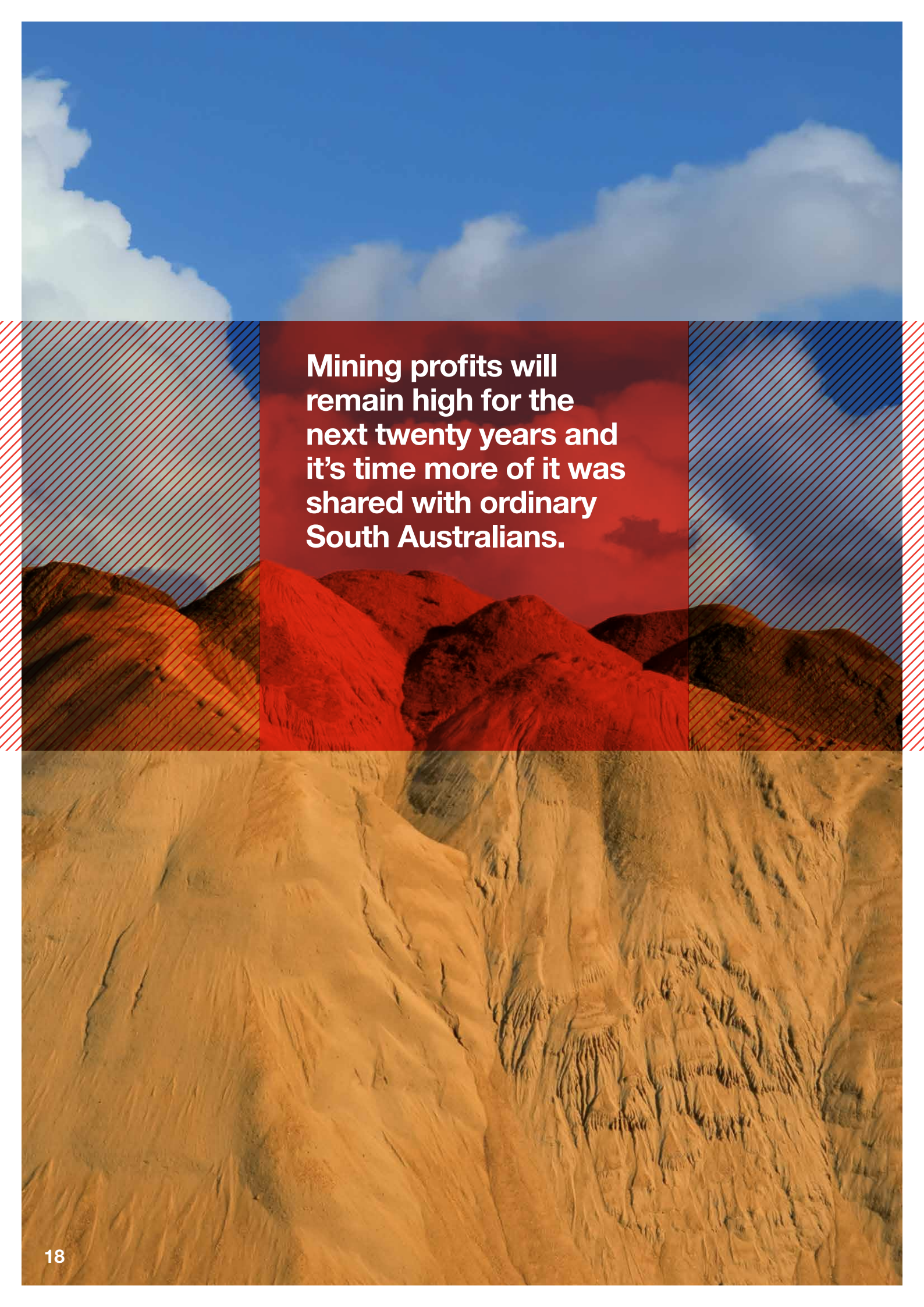
Low youth wages, combined with high levels of casual work, continue to keep young people at the bottom of the economic heap.

Welfare policies that blame the poor for their own poverty, put unreasonable demands on their behaviour and activities and seek to control their expenditure are demeaning and create complexities and pressure in people's lives. The value of allowances for the unemployed, young people and single parents is inadequate and has not kept up with the cost of living.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Governments only award contracts to companies that guarantee decent wages and collective bargaining
- A decent minimum wage
- Measures to address the growing gender pay gap by attaching more value to the traditional work of women and encouraging employment of women in high paying and non-traditional areas of work
- The abolition of youth wages
- An increase in the employer contribution for superannuation to levels that ensure a comfortable retirement for all
- An undertaking that the state government not cooperate with or facilitate processes involving income management by the federal government
- Improved concessions on utilities, rent and car registration for low income people





**Mining profits will
remain high for the
next twenty years and
it's time more of it was
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South Australians.**

Meeting the challenges ahead

3 Sharing the wealth

The impact of a mining boom and defence expansion

South Australia is on the cusp of a major expansion in our mining industry, with significant potential for growth in the next decade. Driven by high overseas demand for minerals, South Australia is highly regarded as a globally significant destination to explore and invest in copper, uranium, iron ore, gold, heavy minerals, base metals and industrial minerals.

(Source: www.pir.sa.gov.au/minerals/industry_overview)

But while the mining industry is creating vast wealth for a select few, and decent wages for those working in the sector, it is also having a negative impact on many Australian workers and their communities.

Mining has an impact on every part of the economy, including by putting upward pressure on the Australian dollar, which has created huge problems for our exports and our manufacturing sector in particular.

It's time that governments intervened to make sure the wealth is spread around.

Mining profits will remain high for the next twenty years and it's time more of it was shared with ordinary South Australians, both in higher royalties and in the creation of local jobs. We don't want to see a two-tiered economy. High wages in some sectors but not in others, and a rapid influx of workers, can lead to price rises, housing shortages, greater inequality, significant social issues and even a lowering of skill levels in vital areas.

The Air Warfare Destroyer project and the expansion of defence industry should provide opportunities to build a high end manufacturing sector and the challenge of climate change has the opportunity to create a new green manufacturing jobs.

This will require innovation, planning and investment so we can ensure there are long term jobs and industry in our state.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Legislation for a significant increase in royalties of mining companies in South Australia
- Royalties to be used to develop social capital in the areas in which they operate including infrastructure and programs for community development
- Local content and local employment
- An open, enforceable and fair process for the negotiation of mining rights and other issues between Aboriginal people and companies
- Value adding is an integral part of the mining and defence industries and that the expansion of these industries delivers a sustainable processing and manufacturing sector
- A focus on innovation in the development of a long term manufacturing industry that links with the defence industry, food and the green economy
- The creation of social infrastructure into all plans for industry expansion including the provision of affordable housing, community, education and health services

Manufacturing employs almost 1 million people in Australia.

More than 100,000 jobs have been lost in manufacturing since the GFC in 2008 and the corresponding high dollar.

For every manufacturing job in Australia, between 2-5 others are created. In banking each job creates 1.3 flow on jobs.

Globally, between 30 and 55 per cent of service jobs are linked to manufacturing.

Australia's investment in R&D is below the OECD average.¹

¹ Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D as percentage of GDP. OECD 2010

Meeting the challenges ahead

Jobs and skills

If we invest in the education and skills of our citizens, South Australia will be better equipped to face the future. Industry needs skilled workers and skilled workers need decent jobs.

Unions have an important role to play in ensuring workers have access to the training they need to develop a wide range of skills and recognised qualifications to offer these industries.

It's crucial that unions and employees sit around the table as equal partners to make sure the needs of industry and the needs of workers are given equal weight. In the development of the training system, and planning for the skills needs of the state, the government should take its advice from both unions and employers.

South Australia is experiencing a growing shortage of skilled workers to drive the future economy of our state. If we are to take full advantage of the opportunities in our mining and defence industries, we need to have a more highly skilled workforce. There is also a significant skill shortage in the community and service sectors which will increase with the introduction of the DisabilityCare (the National Disability Insurance Scheme), a higher demand for quality childcare and an ageing population.

As the economy transitions, we need to acknowledge that workers who have lost their jobs have valuable skills that should be built on and developed so these workers can be utilised in the new emerging sectors of the economy.

SA has traditionally had a low skilled population and many existing workers left school before completing Year 12 or its equivalent. To increase the skill level of the population generally there must be investment in foundation skills: literacy, numeracy and computer literacy, as well as opportunities for those in insecure employment, the unemployed, disabled and disadvantaged to easily access skills training to help them find jobs.

There are many people in our state who have the ability to work – the young, long-term unemployed, women, people with a disability, Aboriginal people, refugees, migrants and injured workers. During the next decade, South Australia should take every opportunity to provide work for vulnerable people in our community and help them create a positive future for themselves, their families and for our state.

Some of these people will need specially designed programs to help them get work. Community Centres and neighborhood centres give people the chance to participate more in their communities and prepare themselves for the world of work, and should be supported to continue this important community development role.

Unions also have the knowledge and experience to assist in this area by designing and running training and employment programs in partnership with the community sector.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- A training levy, similar to the existing construction training levy, should be introduced in all sectors, including the mining sector to build a bipartisan managed fund for the development of skill in all industries and ensure the skill is transferable to other areas of manufacturing in the economy
- An increase in apprentice wages
- Adequate funding for high quality training that has value for workers and builds qualifications and expertise that they can use into the future; and a demand-driven training system balances the needs of individuals with the economic direction and the skill needs of the state
- Enough resources in the training system to provide pathways for those who have been left behind or disengaged from our education system

- A TAFE system that continues to exist as a high quality public provider of training, in recognition of the fact that it has a unique role in leading high quality training and providing opportunities to vulnerable and remote South Australians
- The retention and attraction of young people to our state by creating real employment futures through training that leads to jobs and careers and making it a vibrant and safe place to live, work and raise a family
- An increase in the participation of Aboriginal people in the workforce and for it to be a condition of mining rights that employment is provided for the traditional owners of the country in which the new mines operate
- Training and employment targets for disadvantaged groups in indenture and procurement agreements with companies and as a condition for any government assistance to industry
- A Women's Employment Strategy for the state that addresses the low level of women's participation by providing better training and access to the new jobs in the economy
- Special tailored programs which increase the skill and employment of South Australians who currently have no or little access to employment
- Longer-term, sustainable funding to community centres and neighborhood houses, in which more than on-third of staff are contract or casual employees

Projected economic growth:

average of 2.9% per annum
from 2010/11 to 2015/16

Projected employment growth:

average of 1.4% per annum
from 2010/11 to 2015/16

Projected labour productivity growth:

average of 1.4% per annum
from 2010/11 to 2015/16

Jobs from economic growth:

58,000 new jobs between
2010/11 and 2015/16

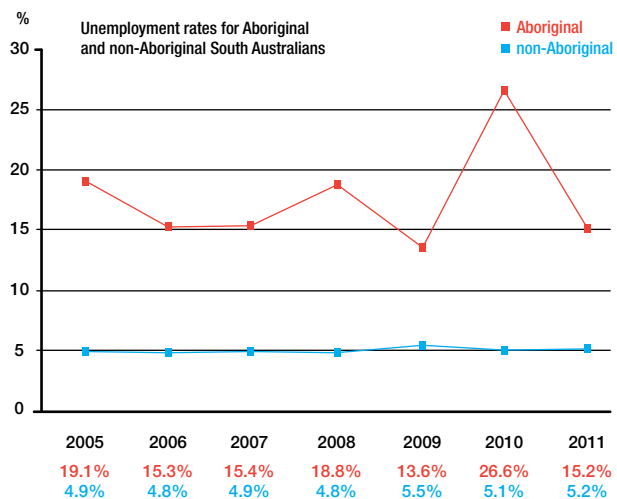
Replacement demand:

81,000 net openings between
2010/11 and 2015/16

Total job openings:

139,000 between 2010/11 and 2015/16

*SA Training and Skills Commission 5 year plan, 2012
– Skills for Jobs*



Overseas workers

While our first priority must be to help local people raise their skill levels and provide them with employment opportunities, we have always encouraged people to come from other places to work in our state and nation. South Australian industry has been built by the hard work of generations of people who've migrated to this state. We welcome diversity, but not exploitation.

It is unsustainable to rely on temporary visa and guest labour schemes to fill short-term jobs because it does nothing to address our long term skills shortages.

The exploitation of temporary visa holders is a growing and dangerous trend in the Australian workforce, which is a deliberate strategy by employers to create a working underclass who don't know their rights and are fearful of being deported if they report or complain.

Overseas workers on these visa arrangements have higher rates of injury and death than Australian-trained workers, and are often paid less with inferior working conditions.

People making their home in Australia deserve the same pay, protections and rights as everyone else, including the right to join and be active in their union. They deserve the protection of the Australian industrial relations system, not to be treated like indentured labour.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- The abolition of the temporary visa system as a poor solution to labour and skill shortages in favour of genuine and fair immigration programs
- An expansion of Workplace English Language programs to assist refugees and migrants better understand their rights

Infrastructure Development and Procurement

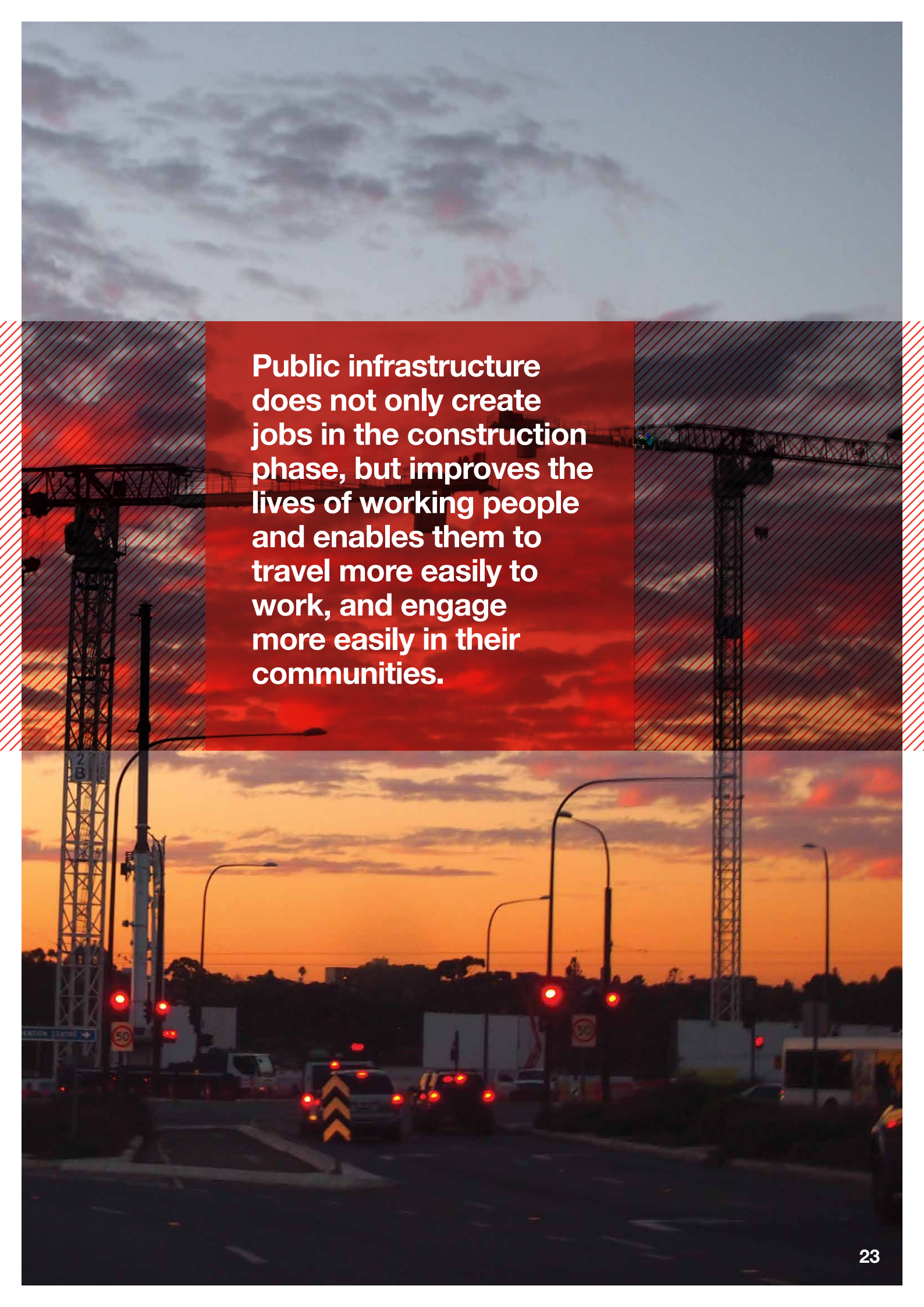
South Australia is undergoing a major infrastructure investment program, largely funded by the federal and state governments. This investment in transport corridors, in public transport, in hospitals and in major sporting infrastructure has created jobs and long-term benefits for our community and our industry.

Public infrastructure does not only create jobs in the construction phase, but improves the lives of working people and enables them to travel more easily to work, and engage more easily in their communities.

The reliance on private funding of public infrastructure needs to be viewed with caution as this can lead to increased costs for the general public and a remain a financial burden to the state over time.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- State and federal governments to build into tender processes a requirement to support local jobs, by sourcing locally manufactured materials and local services
- The development of new social infrastructure should not be designed to create outsourced or privatised workforces
- Infrastructure development should be packaged by governments to make it attractive for investment from industry superannuation funds which have been created by workers' investments
- Economic growth through state government investment and borrowing for infrastructure development



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4 The next generation

The work challenges facing young South Australians

Just as our economy is changing, so are the jobs within it. Young people starting high school now will enter an ever-changing job market when they leave in five years time. Once they finish school, there will be more study options than ever before, through universities, TAFE, apprenticeships and traineeships.

Unfortunately, some things about being a young person in the workforce haven't changed. Research has shown that if young people manage to find employment, they continue to be discriminated against, underpaid, treated unfairly and injured at work at higher rates than adults. Although part time casual work is common for young people while they are at school or studying, an alarming new pattern is emerging of young people being trapped in insecure work for the whole of their working lives.

Their work is overwhelmingly insecure – casual or contract – and they are locked out of annual leave, predictable working hours, sick leave and any long-term connection to work. They are also locked out of the permanent workforce and the benefits that can bring – including being able to borrow money for a home or car or plan a family.

Apprentice wages continue to be so low that a first year apprentice electrician will earn \$250 less than an eighteen-year old trainee at McDonalds. Half of all apprentices drop out before qualifying.

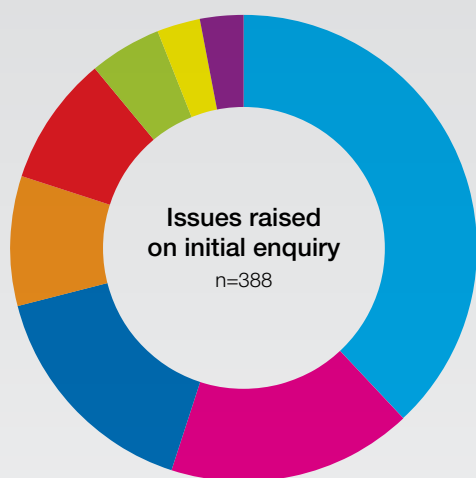
The exploitation of young people in unpaid work and trial shifts is rife in some parts of the workforce, and preys on young people's enthusiasm and innocence.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

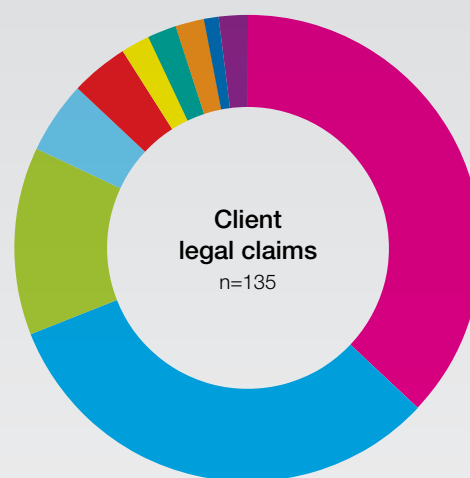
- Child Labour laws in South Australia to stop the exploitation of young people at work
- The abolition of youth wages, which are set at a percentage of the adult wage for people under 21 in some industries
- A crack down by the Fair Work Ombudsman on unpaid work and a more aggressive approach to prosecuting employers who are clearly exploiting young people
- A simple, smooth and supported transition for young people between school, training and work
- The retention and attraction of young people to our state by creating real pathways between training and secure employment and by making it a vibrant and safe place to live and work
- Leadership by the state government to ensure that the festivals and major events it funds don't unwittingly exploit young people with extended unpaid work or volunteering arrangements
- High quality programs in schools, including programs about rights at work and the role of trade unions, as part of the South Australian Certificate of Education



Charts from Young Workers Legal Service Annual Report 2011/2012



- **38%** Termination of employment
- **9%** Workplace disputes
- **17%** Wages and entitlements
- **5%** Discrimination
- **16%** Other
- **3%** Sexual harassment
- **9%** Bullying
- **3%** General rights information



- **37%** Unfair dismissal
- **32%** Underpayment
- **13%** Discrimination
- **4%** Sexual harassment
- **2%** Redundancy
- **2%** Contract advice
- **2%** General rights info
- **1%** Disciplinary proceedings
- **0%** Bullying/harassment
- **2%** Other



Meeting the challenges ahead

5 First Australians Justice and equity for Aboriginal people

“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting our time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

Lilla Watson, Gangulu woman, artist, activist, academic

Aboriginal people are the first peoples of our state and country and continue to practice the oldest living culture in the world. Through ceremony, they continue to operate under traditional law that keeps families strong, helps languages flourish and sustains their communities.

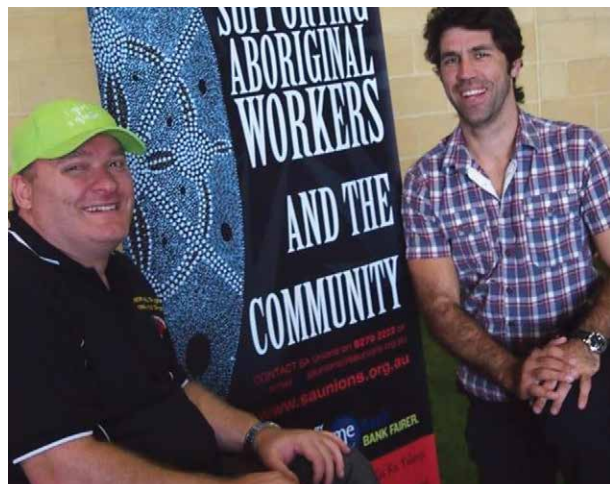
In South Australia, the union movement considers it our responsibility to support Aboriginal people to exercise self determination, build their own power and maintain their links with culture and country.

Due to past and present policies, discrimination and racism, there is a large gap in the participation rate of Aboriginal people in the South Australian workforce.

In recent years, the South Australian union movement has listened to Aboriginal elders and union members, built relationships and encouraged support networks.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Respect for Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and to acknowledge their on-going relationship with their land
- Genuine economic, educational and social opportunities for Aboriginal people and their communities
- Cultural awareness programs in workplaces and union training programs which include the history of this land, the interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and where unions and others have supported Aboriginal people in their struggles
- Avenues for Aboriginal people to join be more involved in the union movement
- An increase in the participation rate of Aboriginal people in the workforce and encourage employers to employ more Aboriginal people
- Opposition to government policies, such as income management and the NT intervention, which take control away from communities and lead to fewer opportunities
- An open and fair process between Aboriginal people and companies for the negotiation of mining rights and other issues





**It is our responsibility
to support Aboriginal
people to exercise self
determination, build
their own power and
maintain their links with
culture and country.**

Meeting the challenges ahead

6 Community sector Delivering quality services to South Australians into the future

Thousands of South Australians work in the community sector providing quality services to some of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged community members. The sector is characterised by a highly dedicated and skilled workforce made up of 85% women. This workforce and the sector are at the heart of our community.

Urgent workforce issues are threatening the sector's future capacity to provide quality and consistent services as workers find themselves unable to stay in the sector in the long term.

The 2012 decision in the Australian Services Union's equal remuneration (or equal pay) case ensured the issue of low pay was finally addressed and also recognised the undervaluation of the sector because the workforce is primarily made up of women. The state and federal governments' commitment to fund the case's outcomes is highly regarded and welcomed.

We welcome the introduction of DisabilityCare. We believe that for implementation to be successful, workforce issues which will arise must also be resolved.

If we are to build a truly socially inclusive community, it is imperative that all workforce and broader sectoral issues are collaboratively addressed in order to build a strong and sustainable sector for the future.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Decent and secure jobs with ongoing mechanisms to improve wages through collective bargaining contemplated in funding agreements
- The development of a workforce-wide attraction and retention strategy
- Structured career paths and development programs and funding to support them
- Structures that support mobility throughout the sector for workers, for instance, a portable long service leave scheme for workers in the sector and initial funding provided for it
- Funding decisions based on factors relating to quality rather than lowest price only
- The sector's role as an advocate must be respected and recognised
- The relationship between government, the sector, business and all stakeholders must focus on collaboratively achieving outcomes with and for our community



7 Jobs for the future

Climate change and the environment

South Australia has its capital on the edge of a desert and at the end of a river. This makes us especially vulnerable to, but also aware of climate change. It also gives us great opportunities for innovation and job creation in the areas of renewable energy, water management, bio-diversity and land management. We have plenty of sunshine and lead the nation in wind energy. Our food and wine is recognised all over the world as having come from a clean and green environment.

There is a clear link between a clean environment and jobs. We have the opportunity to shift our manufacturing, construction and agricultural industries into a new era of green technology through investment and support for innovation so we can become a leader in Australia as well as creating local jobs and export opportunities for business and industry.

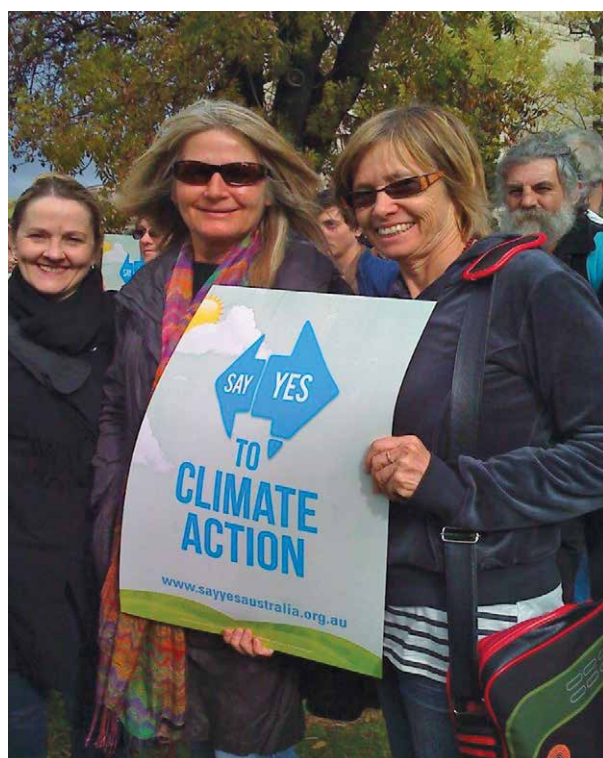
Projects such as solar power generation in Whyalla and opportunities such as the conversion of the Port Augusta Power station to renewables are showing the way. To move into an innovative, green economy we will require state and federal government as well as private investment in research, education and skill development. It also requires bold and creative leadership from industry.

To ensure that people are not left behind in the move to renewable solutions, people on low incomes need financial incentives and support to install technology.

If we want to see our food manufacturing grow, we will need to protect our clean, green reputation and ensure fertile land is safeguarded for food production and agriculture is managed in a sustainable way. We also need to expand this industry by supporting local manufacturing and value adding industries.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Increased support for local and environmentally innovative manufacturing to increase jobs in this sector
- Increased promotion interstate and overseas of our clean and green food manufacturing
- South Australia as a world leader in green technology
- Incentives for people on low income to adopt renewable energy



Meeting the challenges ahead

8 Skills, innovation and manufacturing Our changing workplaces

Manufacturing is a significant employer in South Australia and it is economically important to have a manufacturing industry if we are to have a sustainable economy and develop the skills of workers. However, our economy is changing and it's crucial that we focus on high skilled, innovative manufacturing that differentiates us from low skill, low wage economies. The other imperative is to find niche manufacturing markets and use our strengths in research and high-skilled workers to expand our export industries.

South Australia should not compete on wages. As a community, we value our high living standards, our fair wages, and our workplace safety standards. These must not be put at risk.

We should compete on world markets through our innovation and high quality products; with our creativity and the inherent strengths of our workforce. Our established wine industry and our growing food industry are examples of our capacity to produce and export the high quality and clean, green products that the world is looking for, especially the growing Asian markets.

If we are to refocus our manufacturing base, South Australia needs government, business, unions, research and educational institutions and the public sector to work more collaboratively and creatively.

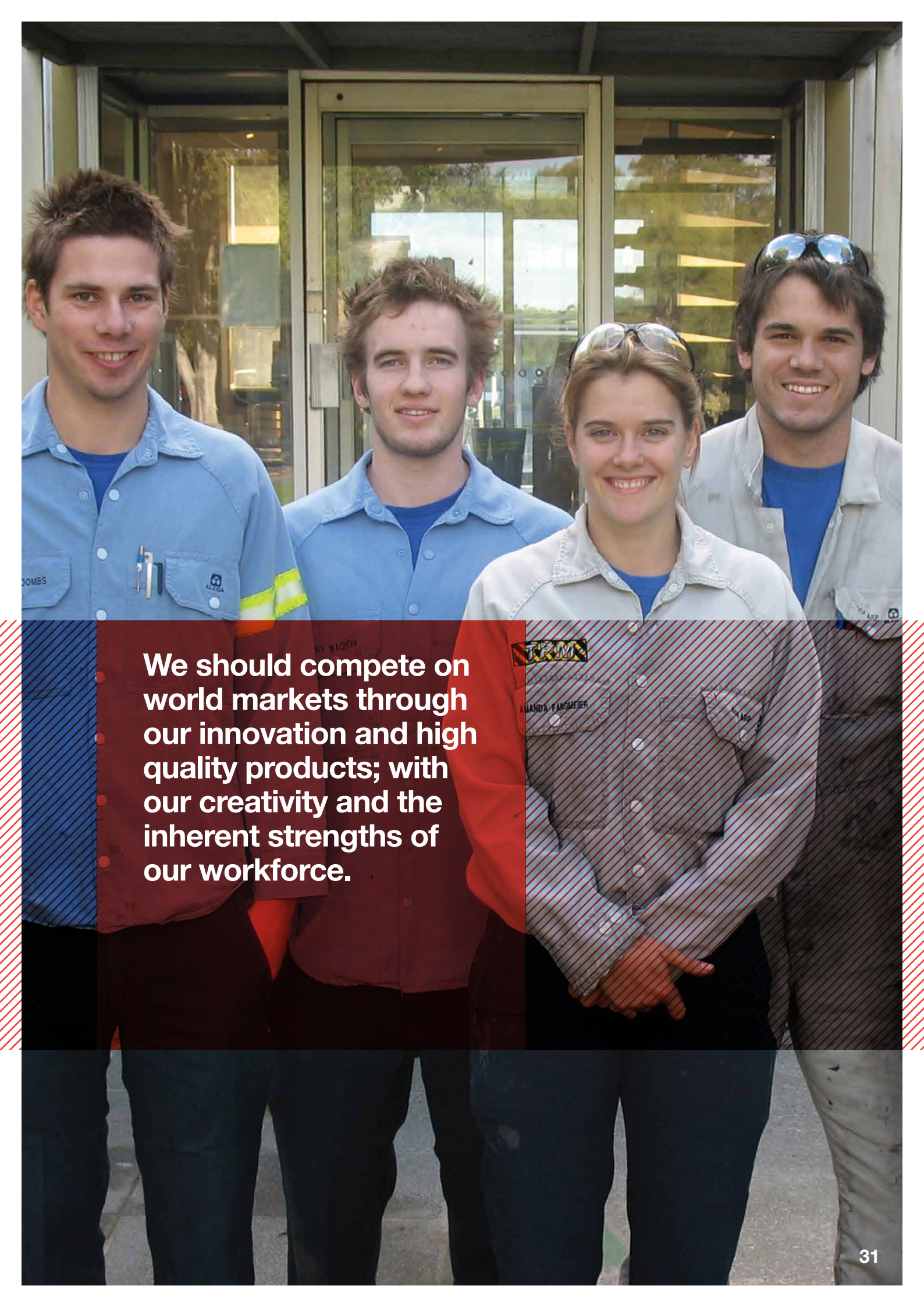
We welcome the state government's commitment to improvements in productivity through innovation, rather than by driving down wages.

WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:

- Regional food trails and clustering of boutique food manufacturers to build local markets and export opportunities
- That local companies can compete for government tenders through initiatives such as the Industry Participation Advocate
- That the state government fosters the next generation of high end manufacturing and new industries such as biotechnology, mining services, and green technologies
- The *Skills for All* program should be properly targeted to provide the skills that workers need to participate fully in new and emerging industries
- Access for existing workers to build on their current skills and up skill for the future, so they are not left behind and their skills are not wasted in a changing manufacturing landscape
- The participation of workers in the development of industries and innovation

“Securing retaining and developing skilled staff is critical to the success of advanced manufacturing operations. Skilled staff are able to provide new knowledge and thinking to businesses – contributing to innovation.”

Economic Statement 2013, Government of South Australia, p. 84

A photograph of four young adults, three men and one woman, standing in front of a building with large glass doors. They are all wearing safety gear: hard hats and high-visibility work shirts. The man on the far left is wearing a blue shirt with 'COMBS' on the pocket. The man in the center is wearing a blue shirt. The woman in the foreground is wearing a white shirt with 'AMANDA FANGMEIER' on the pocket. The man on the far right is wearing a white shirt. They are all smiling at the camera. A red and white striped banner is overlaid on the bottom half of the image, containing the text 'We should compete on world markets through our innovation and high quality products; with our creativity and the inherent strengths of our workforce.'

We should compete on world markets through our innovation and high quality products; with our creativity and the inherent strengths of our workforce.

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