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CPSU considers plan for more centralised bargaining, as nominations open for union election

The CPSU's governing council is today expected to adopt an ["agenda for change"](#) that includes pushing for a return to more centralised bargaining, coinciding with nominations opening for the union's election.

The agenda document floats the idea of a framework arrangement for wages and classifications, with agency-level negotiations to provide flexibility for employers and employees.

It asks: "Could a framework for whole of government wage and classification systems deliver fairer and better outcomes for Australian Government workers?"

The union characterises the proposal as ending the "fragmented" approach to bargaining that it believes has occurred for the past decade (for further detail, see a recent [comment piece](#) by CPSU national secretary Stephen Jones).

Meanwhile, [nominations](#) for all of the union's main paid and unpaid positions opened on Wednesday and will close on Wednesday, September 24.

If an election is required, it will open on November 19 and close on December 10.

The incumbent [leadership team](#), headed by secretary Stephen Jones, is standing for a further three-year term.

[Members First](#), which challenged the incumbent team at the last poll, hasn't decided yet whether to run.

Work Choices behind my Senate move, says Farrell

It was the Coalition's Work Choices legislation that encouraged new ALP Senator from South Australia, former SDA state secretary Don Farrell - to run at the last election, he told (see page 68 of Wednesday's [Hansard](#)) the Senate in his first speech this week.

"As a unionist for 32 years, and like so many other ordinary Australians, I was appalled by the Work Choices regime that the Coalition foisted on ordinary Australian families," he said.

"This was not the Australia I wanted to be a part of, and I felt so strongly about it I wanted to have

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a hands-on role in dismantling it. I wanted to be directly involved in restoring the sort of Australia my parents' and grandparents' generation worked and fought so hard to build and protect."

Senator Farrell said that one of the greatest achievements of the SDA leadership had been the development and implementation of the REST superannuation scheme for the union's members.

Meanwhile, Senator Mark Furner, the former Queensland secretary of the NUW, told the Senate (see page 43 of Tuesday's [Hansard](#)), that the Howard's Government's attempt to demonise union officials made his resolve to defeat the Coalition stronger.

"One only needs to look at the community work many unions are involved in to dispel the myth that union officials are thugs," he said.

Mark Arbib, a one-time TWU official before becoming secretary of the NSW branch of the ALP, told the Senate in his first speech (see page 71, Wednesday) that paid maternity leave, better support services and equitable and flexible childcare had to be part of parliament's future program.

"The time has come for our institutions to truly recognise the values of parenting and make the changes necessary to enable parents to enjoy a more rewarding family life," he said.

"Indeed, what is required is a new definition of success, one that champions the balance of home and work life, because there is no benefit in forging a stellar career if it is at the expense of your children.

"Although there may be a short-term cost for these measures, the benefits in terms of childhood development welfare, along with the increased productivity gained through greater worker satisfaction, can never be calculated," he said.

Court gives WO chance to fix deficient application

The Federal Magistrates Court has given the Workplace Ombudsman a chance to amend a "deficient" application to prosecute an engineering company for allegedly discriminating against employees who complained to an IR authority.

KSN Engineering Pty Ltd sought to strike out the Ombudsman's application on the basis that it was deficient and that the claims within it didn't align with the remedies being sought.

Federal Magistrate Toni Lucev accepted the contentions that the WO's amended statement of claim "does not fulfil the basic function of properly identifying the issues and apprising the parties of the case that has to be met having regard to the remedies sought".

Further, he said, the pleading in the case was "so deficient" and, such were the problems in the affidavit from the WO's inspector, that there was "a fundamental problem" in identifying the "true issues" to which that the company was required to respond.

Federal Magistrate Lucev noted it was the first occasion on which the court had scrutinised the pleadings and, rather than making formal orders striking out much of the statement of claim, gave the WO until September 19 to amend it.

[Buckingham v KSN Engineering Pty Ltd & Anor \[2008\] FMCA 546 \(29 August 2008\)](#)

Latest Garnaut report says climate change inaction would cut wages by 12%

A [report](#) released today by Rudd Government climate change advisor Ross Garnaut says that the costs of unmitigated climate change would be far higher than previously thought, involving a 10% fall in GNP and a 12% reduction in wages by 2100.

He says that tackling climate change will bring about only about a 0.1% reduction in Australia's rate of annual economic growth, he says.

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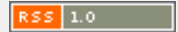


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