

# UNION STRONG - UNION ACTIVE TEAM

## CWU Victoria Branch Election June 2023

*Our plan to increase the participation of Women in the CWU*



### CWU Women Members

Women make up close to 40% of the membership in the CWU Victorian P&T Branch; and almost 45% of all members nationally are women. Compared to other unions, the CWU has been very slow at acknowledging that fact or at encouraging any participation of women.

Even unions like the **CFMMEU**, the **ETU** and the **AMWU** which are recognised as the 'blue collar' male dominated unions, have active Women's committees. They have rules that are specific to the election and genuine participation of Women in those unions.

**The CWU has a very poor track record when it comes to participation of Women.** Despite having an 'Affirmative Action' position that is initially voted on only by Women members. In the last two election cycles the Affirmative Action positions have been vacated before the 4-year term had been completed and the position has been filled by a majority of men voting on a position that is supposed to be about Affirmative Action! No other union has a rule that allows this to happen. **It's not an Affirmative Action position when men are making the decisions about which women get to participate. This rule is archaic and has to go.**

Under the CWU rules there is supposed to be a '**National Women's Committee**' that meets annually. Shamefully, the CWU did not form a National Women's Committee or hold an annual meeting from the formation of the CWU in 1992 to 2012. In 2012 the CWU Divisional Office under Dan Dwyer as National Secretary did convene a National Women's Committee and a conference was held with Women members from all states attending, this was despite furious attempts by some of the State Branch Secretaries to stop the conference from going ahead.

***It took twenty years and a change in national leadership to get CWU Women together to talk about our unique issues in and out of the workplace. There has not been another meeting since 2012! You would think our issues don't matter.***

### CWU Women – some facts for you

- Women's superannuation retirement balances are on average 47% lower than men. As a result women are more likely to experience poverty in their retirement years and be more reliant on the Aged Pension.
- Australia's current gender pay gap for full time work is 15.3 percent. Women earn on average \$253.70 less a week than men.
- Women are more likely to be in casual employment than men: 25.5 percent of all female employee's in Australia are casual compared to 19.7 percent of male employees.
- Women spend 64% of their average weekly working time on unpaid care work compared to 36% for men.
- 22% of females have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace.
- 33% of women have experienced sexual or physical violence in their lifetime.
- 20% of women have experienced violence by a partner.

#### What we will do:

**We will form a CWU Vic Women's Committee that meets regularly at a branch level.**

**We will make sure that your voice is heard at the national level of the union through the CEPU National Council.**

**We will make sure that CWU Women are heard at the ACTU and all levels of government where issues affect us and we want to have a say.**

**We will support other women in other industries, and in other unions.**

**We will never stop fighting for equality for ourselves, our daughters, and our sisters at work.**