

ACTUS WORKPLACE LAWYERS

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ACTU clarifies its sector-wide industrial action claims

In a speech to the National Press Club on 28 September, ACTU Secretary Sally McManus clarified that the unions are pushing for workers to have the right to take industrial action in pursuit of sector-wide agreements. The ACTU is also pushing for the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to have more powers to intervene in bargaining disputes.

In arguing for sector-wide industrial action rights, Ms McManus said: "If workers have no access to protected action, bargaining power is reduced to almost zero'.

In pushing for the FWC to be given more powers, Ms McManus said: "The current enterprise bargaining system often entrenches conflict and division because bargaining is drawn out far too long with unnecessary hurdles, legal complexities, and an ineffective independent umpire. The classic example of this is enterprise bargaining at Sydney Trains".

Actus Workplace Lawyers has published a [policy paper](#) analysing the ACTU's industry bargaining proposal and outlining the reasons why the proposal is not in Australia's interests.

A relevant opinion piece by Stephen Smith, Principal of Actus Workplace Lawyers entitled "[The pattern bargaining lessons of the past must not be forgotten](#)" was recently published in the *Australian Financial Review*.

Actus Workplace Lawyers are available to provide strategic advice to employers about enterprise bargaining, as well as assistance in drafting and negotiating enterprise agreements, dealing with any industrial action, and arranging approval by the FWC. We are also able to assist with applications to vary or terminate enterprise agreements.

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