



Centre for Labour, Employment and Work

CLEW 50th Anniversary Seminar: *Is it time to reset our Employment Relations Systems?*

Wednesday 14 April, 9am-4.30pm,

Lecture Theatre 1, Rutherford House, 33 Bunny Street, Wellington

The early 1990s represented a significant shift in the way in which core employment provisions were determined – from a centrally negotiated, occupationally based system to decentralised, enterprise/employer-based system, with or without the involvement of union representation for employees. This reflected changes in the economic structures with consequent political and social changes – contracting out of services, particularly in the public sector; increase in companies owned offshore or by equity companies; wage rates and other employment conditions determined by the ‘market’ rather than through regulation and/or central negotiation across occupations. The Employment Relations Act restored union rights in bargaining but retained the decentralised system of the ECA and in the last 30 years there has been an eroding of collective bargaining and employment provisions, particularly wages. There is also new forms of ‘employment’ and work arrangements with the rise of labour hire companies; gig workers; and short-term contract/agency work. So thirty years on from the ECA is our employment relations system still fit for purpose?

This seminar will consider this question by looking at the legislative environment; union organisation and effectiveness; the new forms of work; and what new systems might be needed or what changes might ‘future-proof’ the current systems.

9-9:15am – **Welcome** from Professor Jane Bryson, Dean of the Wellington School of Business and Government

9.15-10am – **Opening address – Hon Michael Wood, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety** (30 mins and Q&A if possible)

10-10.20 – short morning tea break

10:20am -11.50: **'Rethinking the legislative architecture' Professor Gordon Anderson.**

Discussants:

Christina Inglis, Chief Judge of the Employment Court of NZ;

Peter Cranney, Partner, Oakley Moran Law.

11.50-12.50 – LUNCH

12.50-2.30pm – **Collective bargaining and unions – still an effective tool for determining wages, hours and working provisions? – Professor David Peetz, Griffith University, Queensland.**

Discussants:

John Ryall, former Assistant National Secretary of E tū and member of the Fair Pay Agreement Working Group and the Joint Working Group on Pay Equity Principles;

Kerry Davies, National Secretary, NZ Public Service Association Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi.

Judy Dell, Principal Mediator, Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment.

2.30-3pm – Afternoon tea break

3-4.30pm – **Employment relations and the changing work environment**

As new forms of work and new ways of working evolve is the current employment relations system still working effectively.

Panel:

Dr Rose Ryan, Manager, Workforce and Workplace, Evidence and Insights, Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment;

Melissa Ansell-Bridges, Secretary, NZCTU; and

Paul Mackay, Manager – Employment Relations Policy at Business NZ.

Registration Fee - \$230 (incl gst)

Registrations close – Friday, April 9, 2021.

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