

## CHAPTER 9

### INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The ABS produces statistics about industrial disputes, trade union membership, and the incidence of awards, determinations and collective agreements which cover some aspects of Australian industrial relations.

The industrial disputes statistics presented in this chapter are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and government) and trade unions concerning individual disputes and from reports of government authorities.

The basis for the calculation of working days lost due to industrial disputes per thousand employees was changed in January 1987 to include estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings. They are combined with estimates of the number of employees in agriculture and in private households obtained from the Labour Force Survey to derive the denominator. The effect of the change is minimal at the 'all industries' level but is quite significant, in some cases, for individual industry groups.

Data on trade unions are obtained from two sources. An annual collection of trade unions is conducted to obtain information on membership. In addition, a supplementary household survey was conducted in August 1986 to provide information on the characteristics of trade union members such as their age, occupation, industry of work, and earnings.

Statistics of the award coverage of employees were obtained in conjunction with the Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours conducted in May 1985.

#### SELECTED FEATURES

##### Industrial Disputes

The number of working days lost for disputes in progress during the year was 1.32 million in 1987, a slight decrease from the 1986 estimate of 1.39 million. The totals for the years 1983 to 1987 are relatively low compared with the number of days lost during the preceding decade.

The number of employees involved in disputes (directly and indirectly) decreased from 691,700 in 1986 to 605,300 in 1987.

##### Trade Union Statistics

At 30 June 1987 there were 316 trade unions with a total membership of 3,240,100 persons (or 56 per cent of all employees). At 31 December 1977 there were 324 trade unions with a total membership of 2,797,900 (or 55 per cent of all employees).

There were nine unions at 30 June 1987 of which each had a membership of 80,000 or more. These accounted for 34 per cent of the total union membership.

The decrease in the number of unions from 324 in 1977 to 316 in 1987 was due to a number of factors, including amalgamations and mergers of unions and unions ceasing to operate.

TABLE 9.1. SUMMARY OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES : 1967 TO 1987

Period	Number of disputes		Employees involved ('000)						Total working days lost ('000)
	Commenced during period	Total	Directly		Indirectly		Total		
			Newly involved (a)	Total	Newly involved (a)	Total	Newly involved (a)	Total	
1967	n.a.	1,340	n.a.	472.2	n.a.	11.1	n.a.	483.3	705.3
1968	n.a.	1,713	n.a.	700.8	n.a.	19.5	n.a.	720.3	1,079.5
1969	n.a.	2,014	n.a.	1,244.0	n.a.	41.2	n.a.	1,285.2	1,958.0
1970	n.a.	2,738	n.a.	1,304.2	n.a.	63.3	n.a.	1,367.4	2,393.7
1971	n.a.	2,404	n.a.	1,267.7	n.a.	58.8	n.a.	1,326.5	3,068.6
1972	n.a.	2,298	n.a.	1,041.2	n.a.	72.6	n.a.	1,113.8	2,010.3
1973	n.a.	2,538	n.a.	758.0	n.a.	45.0	n.a.	803.0	2,634.7
1974	n.a.	2,809	n.a.	1,947.1	n.a.	57.8	n.a.	2,004.8	6,292.5
1975	n.a.	2,432	n.a.	1,343.8	n.a.	54.1	n.a.	1,398.0	3,509.9
1976	n.a.	2,055	n.a.	2,137.3	n.a.	52.6	n.a.	2,189.9	3,799.2
1977	2,083	2,090	539.0	539.4	56.8	56.8	595.8	596.2	1,654.8
1978	2,276	2,277	1,011.9	1,011.9	63.7	63.7	1,075.6	1,075.6	2,130.8
1979	2,040	2,042	1,816.7	1,818.0	44.9	44.9	1,861.6	1,862.9	3,964.4
1980	2,420	2,429	1,101.8	1,108.6	63.2	64.0	1,165.0	1,172.6	3,319.7
1981	2,887	2,915	1,147.9	1,170.6	76.5	76.6	1,224.5	1,247.2	4,189.3
1982	2,045	2,060	654.2	680.6	24.2	25.5	678.4	706.1	1,980.4
1983	1,779	1,787	427.4	444.9	25.4	25.4	452.8	470.2	1,641.4
1984	1,958	1,965	520.0	529.2	31.1	31.1	551.1	560.3	1,307.4
1985	1,830	1,845	524.5	542.3	28.2	28.2	552.6	570.5	1,256.2
1986	1,680	1,687	653.8	671.6	20.1	20.1	673.9	691.7	1,390.7
1987	1,471	1,475	584.3	586.8	18.5	18.5	602.8	605.3	1,316.4

(a) Comprises workers involved in disputes that commenced during the period and additional workers involved in disputes that continued from previous periods.

Source: *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (6322.0).

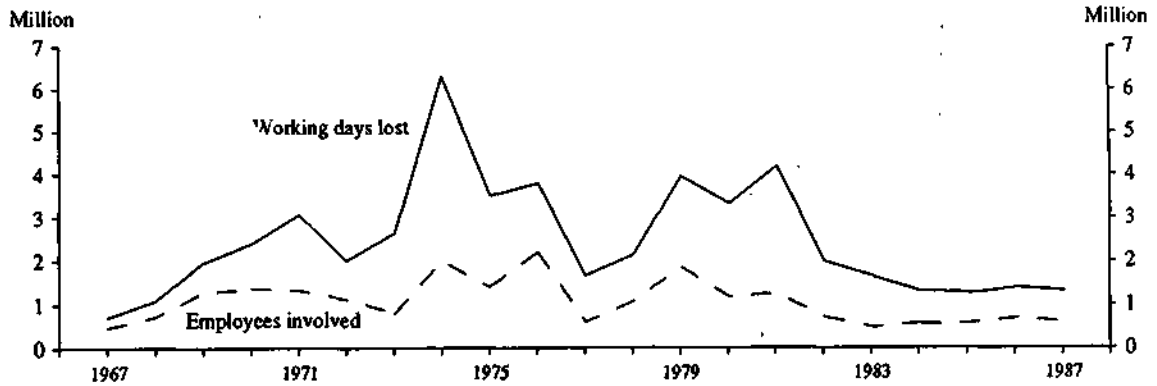
TABLE 9.2. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES : WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES, INDUSTRY, 1972 TO 1987

Period	Mining		Manufacturing		Construction	Transport and storage; Communication		Other industries (a)	All industries
	Coal	Other	Metal products, machinery and equipment	Other		Stevedoring services	Other		
1973	4,268	2,860	1,405	889	1,119	2,705	256	133	552
1974	7,725	2,625	4,876	1,026	3,009	6,172	1,352	194	1,273
1975	14,991	1,576	2,376	674	1,255	2,581	379	230	717
1976	6,602	3,952	1,467	1,245	1,433	2,276	1,010	292	773
1977	4,145	3,182	398	679	591	2,625	450	101	336
1978	5,669	2,415	1,460	747	378	8,418	435	74	434
1979	8,220	5,752	1,886	1,112	1,100	3,724	1,138	269	787
1980(b)	23,362	4,036	1,194	1,080	674	2,548	353	202	649
1981	10,209	5,238	2,287	986	1,405	2,952	970	238	797
1982	9,698	2,686	471	505	768	672	84	358	
1983	3,223	3,375	353	186	1,269	485	42	249	
1984	3,913	3,745	343	416	503	372	91	248	
1985	6,898	1,931	255	312	666	432	71	228	
1986	10,773	3,328	445	328	458	135	72	242	
1987	8,902	1,069	479	305	773	217	69	223	

(a) Exclude agriculture, etc. and private households employing staff for the years 1976-1983 but included from 1984. (b) For change in method of estimation see Appendix 3.

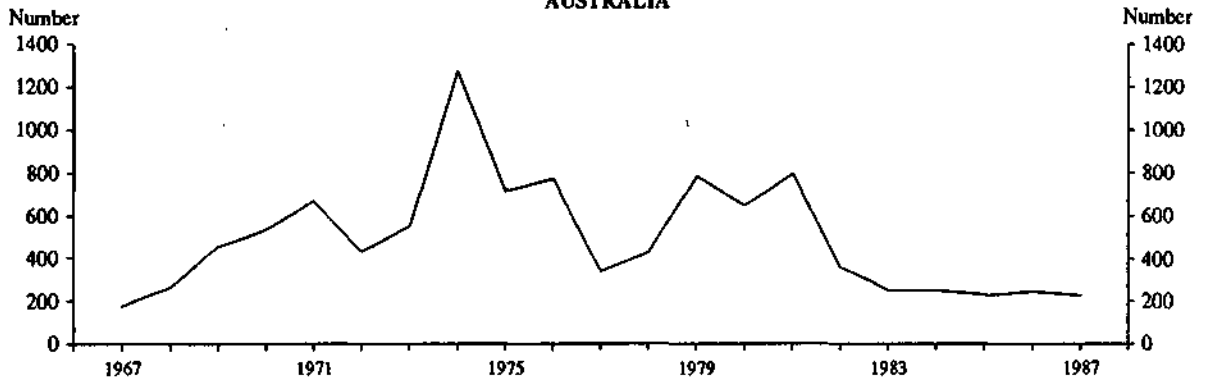
Source: *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (6322.0).

**CHART 9.1. WORKING DAYS LOST AND NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, AUSTRALIA**



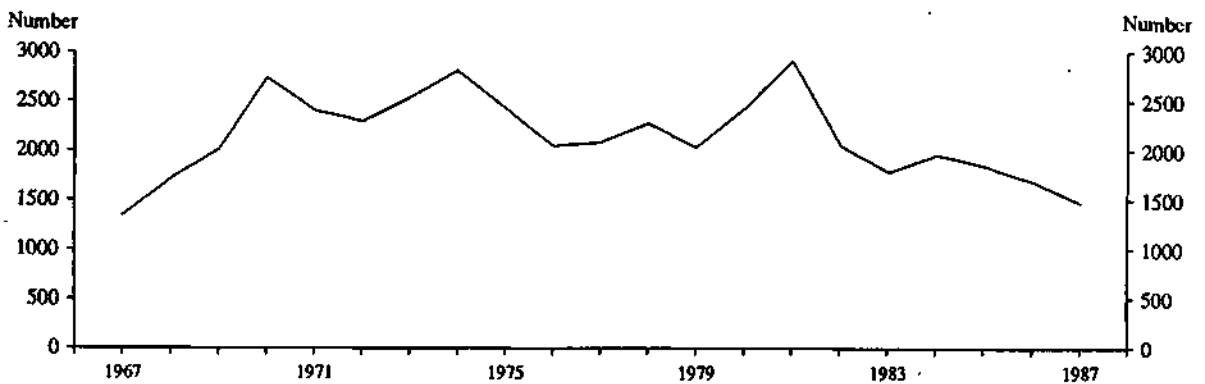
Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0).

**CHART 9.2. WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES AUSTRALIA**



Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0).

**CHART 9.3. NUMBER OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, AUSTRALIA**



Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0).

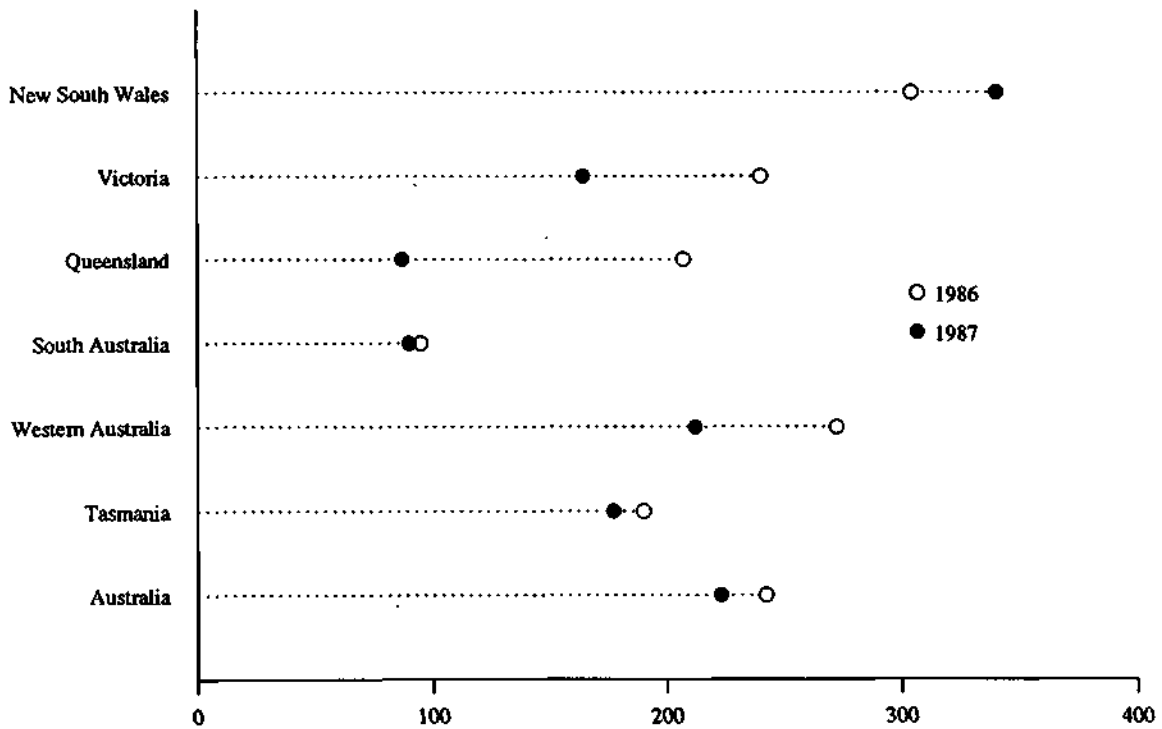
**TABLE 9.3. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES : WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES(a)  
STATES AND AUSTRALIA**

<i>Period</i>	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>Aust.(b)</i>
1967	307	94	175	50	22	63	176
1968	373	208	305	133	73	109	261
1969	460	594	442	325	318	81	458
1970	829	409	318	227	413	258	537
1971	1,095	542	463	264	192	163	669
1972	503	497	485	143	261	152	435
1973	622	590	509	296	313	1,089	552
1974	1,462	1,757	807	686	656	672	1,273
1975	831	910	718	277	253	305	717
1976	827	1,051	638	323	623	464	773
1977	308	433	359	65	532	197	336
1978	555	346	536	172	473	261	434
1979	742	1,083	679	402	838	439	787
1980	657	792	863	132	446	668	649
1981	1,023	863	620	320	548	461	797
1982	381	258	660	101	348	431	348
1983	287	163	176	115	577	478	249
1984	357	132	302	55	256	350	248
1985	209	236	411	47	187	138	228
1986	304	240	207	95	272	190	242
1987	340	164	87	90	212	177	223

(a) For details, see Appendix 3. (b) Includes the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.

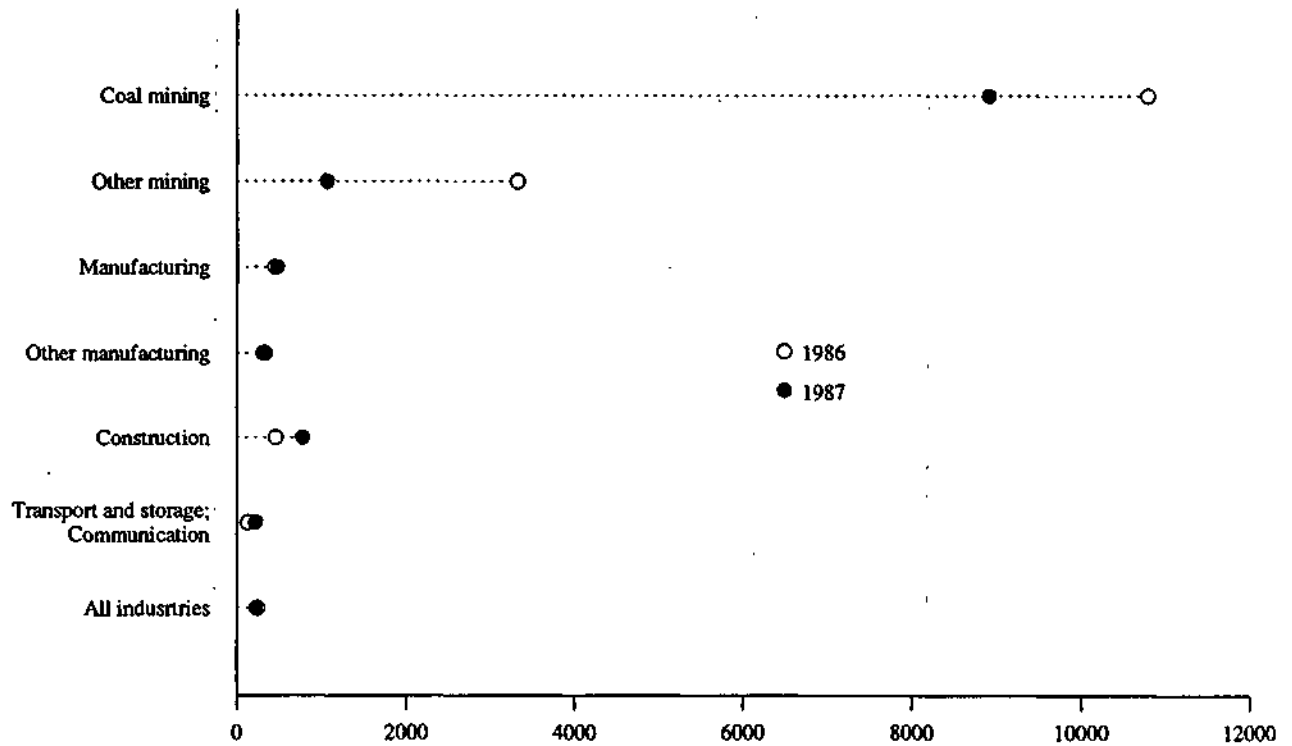
Source: *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (6322.0).

**CHART 9.4. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS DURING EACH YEAR 1986 AND 1987:  
WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES, STATE**



Source: *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (6322.0).

CHART 9.5. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS DURING EACH YEAR 1986 AND 1987:  
WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES, INDUSTRY



Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0).

TABLE 9.4. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS, DECEMBER 1977 TO JUNE 1987

	Number of separate unions	Number of members ('000)			Proportion of total employees (per cent)		
		Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
End of December							
1977	324	1,940.6	857.4	2,797.9	61	46	55
1978	330	1,969.2	861.5	2,830.8	62	46	56
1979	328	1,971.4	902.2	2,873.6	61	47	56
1980	325	2,009.5	946.3	2,955.9	61	47	55
1981	324	2,029.4	964.7	2,994.1	60	47	54
1982	322	2,024.4	988.0	3,012.4	62	48	56
1983	319	2,007.2	978.0	2,985.2	61	47	56
1984	329	2,041.2	987.3	3,028.5	61	45	55
30 June 1985	323	2,121.6	1,032.6	3,154.2	65	46	57
30 June 1986	326	2,126.5	1,059.7	3,186.2	63	44	55
30 June 1987	316	2,136.0	1,104.2	3,240.1	63	44	55

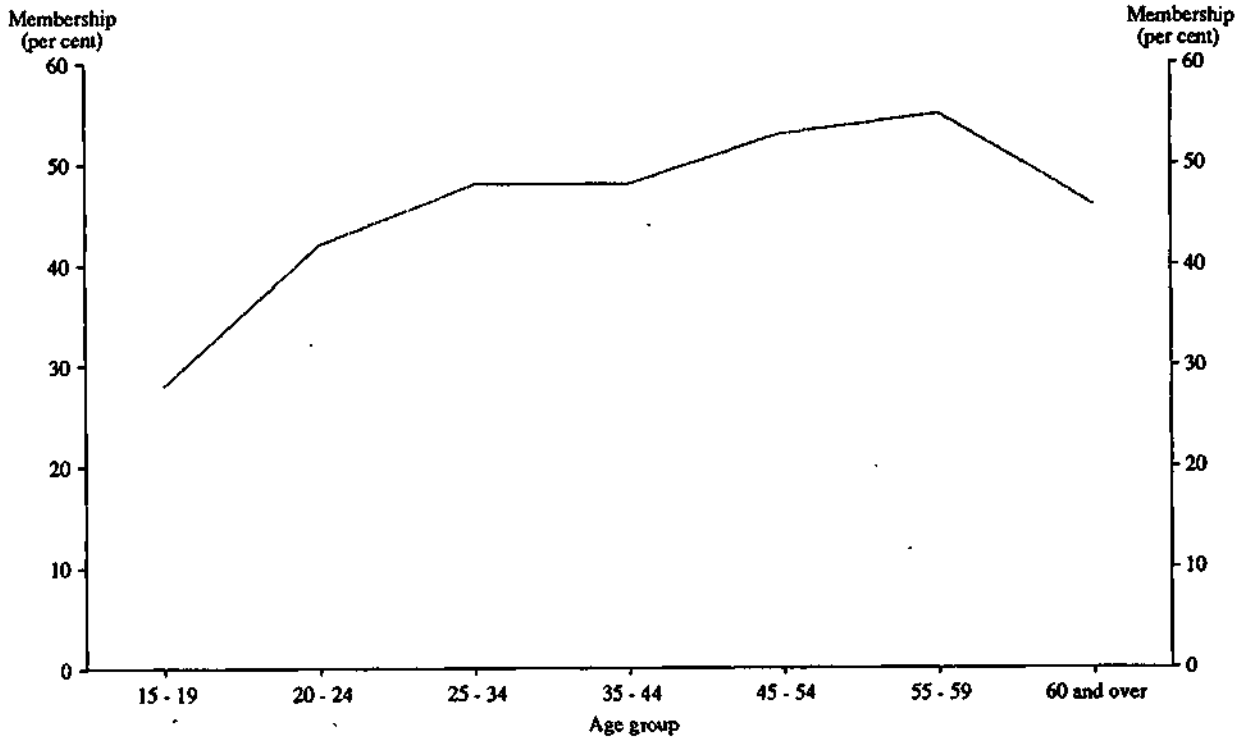
Source: Trade Union Statistics, Australia (6323.0).

TABLE 9.5. TRADE UNIONS : CLASSIFICATION BY SIZE OF MEMBERSHIP, DECEMBER 1977 AND JUNE 1987

Number of members	Number of unions		Proportion of total unions (per cent)		Number of members ('000)		Proportion of total members (per cent)	
	December 1977	June 1987	December 1977	June 1987	December 1977	June 1987	December 1977	June 1987
Under 100	36	40	11.1	12.7	1.7	1.9	0.1	0.1
100 and under 250	42	39	13.0	12.3	6.4	6.6	0.2	0.2
250 and under 500	34	25	10.5	7.9	12.3	9.1	0.4	0.3
500 and under 1,000	45	45	13.9	14.2	31.4	32.0	1.1	1.0
1,000 and under 2,000	40	44	12.3	13.9	56.2	60.0	2.0	1.9
2,000 and under 3,000	} 44 {	13	} 13.6 {	4.1	} 142.4 {	31.7	} 5.1 {	1.0
3,000 and under 5,000		25		7.9		101.9		3.1
5,000 and under 10,000	24	21	7.4	6.6	177.5	149.9	6.3	4.6
10,000 and under 20,000	22	17	6.8	5.4	327.2	234.4	11.7	7.2
20,000 and under 30,000	9	14	2.8	4.4	224.0	338.0	8.0	10.4
30,000 and under 40,000	7	6	2.2	1.9	247.3	203.3	8.8	6.3
40,000 and under 50,000	7	8	2.2	2.5	309.6	366.5	11.1	11.3
50,000 and under 80,000	7	10	2.2	3.2	425.1	618.9	15.2	19.1
80,000 and over	7	9	2.2	2.8	836.6	1,085.9	29.9	33.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,797.9</b>	<b>3,240.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

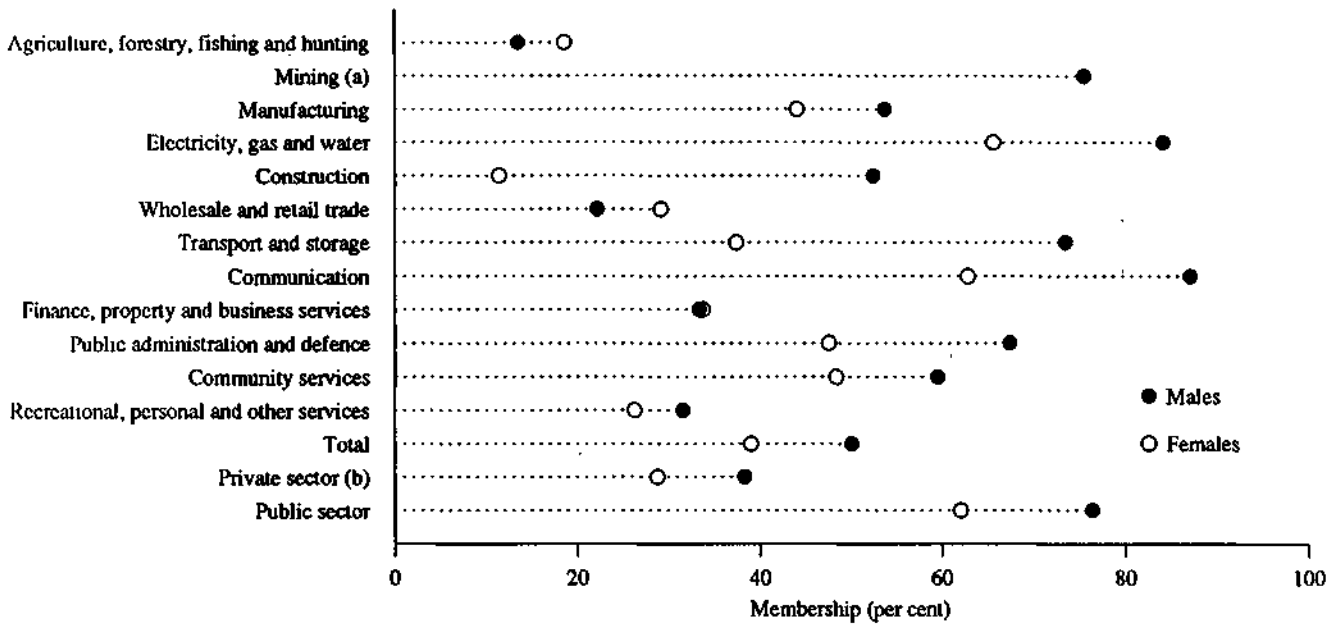
Source: Trade Union Statistics, Australia (6323.0).

CHART 9.6. TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP: AGE, AUGUST 1986



Source: Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1986(6325.0).

CHART 9.7. TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP: INDUSTRY AND SECTOR  
AUGUST 1986



(a) Estimate for females subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. (b) Includes some persons for whom sector could not be determined.

Source: Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1986(6325.0).

TABLE 9.6. INCIDENCE OF AWARDS : ALL EMPLOYEES, OCCUPATION GROUP, MAY 1985  
(Per cent)

Occupation group	Males			Females				
	Covered by awards, determinations and collective agreements			Not covered by awards, etc.	Covered by awards, determinations and collective agreements			Not covered by awards, etc.
	Federal	State	Total		Federal	State	Total	
Professional, technical and related employees	27.7	48.9	78.9	21.1	8.8	81.2	92.1	7.9
Nurses	*	97.5	100.0	—	4.6	93.9	99.0	1.0
Teachers	13.0	77.7	93.1	6.9	6.1	86.3	95.0	5.0
Draftspersons and technicians	46.5	35.9	84.3	15.7	*	61.0	86.8	13.2
Administrative, executive and managerial employees	15.7	13.0	34.8	65.2	*	*	*	66.0
Clerical employees	48.6	33.4	87.0	13.0	27.9	53.4	85.4	14.6
Sales employees	17.7	57.1	78.2	21.8	4.2	83.4	88.6	11.4
Farmers, fisherpersons and related employees	25.1	61.0	87.5	12.5	10.8	76.2	91.6	8.4
Miners, quarry and related employees	57.1	26.9	86.6	13.4	*	*	*	—
Employees in transport and communications	49.9	38.3	91.7	8.3	*	*	88.2	*
Tradespersons, production-process employees and labourers, n.e.c.	52.9	37.7	92.5	7.5	53.8	40.0	94.8	5.2
Textile, clothing, footwear and leather goods makers and related employees	60.4	31.1	93.5	*	64.4	32.6	97.2	*
Machine toolmakers, metal machinists, mechanics, plumbers and related metal employees	63.8	27.2	92.3	7.7	*	*	*	*
Electricians and related electrical and electronics employees	67.1	27.6	95.7	*	93.7	*	96.7	*
Metalmaking and related employees	68.3	26.8	95.5	4.5	90.4	*	95.7	*
Carpenters, cabinetmakers and related employees, building etc. tradespersons and construction employees	41.5	44.2	87.3	12.7	*	*	85.2	*
Packers, wrappers, labellers, storepersons and freight handlers	41.1	50.9	94.3	*	25.8	67.2	94.1	*
Labourers, apprentices, factory employees n.e.c.	42.5	47.5	92.8	7.2	48.1	*	92.7	*
Service, sport and recreation employees	20.1	71.2	92.3	*	17.8	71.5	90.0	*
All occupations	40.0	40.5	83.4	16.6	21.6	63.4	87.4	12.6

Source: Incidence of Awards, Australia, May 1985 (6315.0).

TABLE 9.7. INCIDENCE OF AWARDS : ALL EMPLOYEES BY INDUSTRY, MAY 1985  
(Per cent)

Industry	Males				Females			
	Covered by awards, determinations and collective agreements			Not covered by awards, etc.	Covered by awards, determinations and collective agreements			Not covered by awards, etc.
	Federal	State	Total(a)		Federal	State	Total(a)	
Mining	53.1	26.2	81.9	18.1	29.7	27.4	60.9	39.1
Manufacturing	48.9	32.5	84.0	16.0	39.7	46.7	87.9	12.1
Food, beverages and tobacco	25.5	56.3	85.7	14.3	20.4	69.1	91.4	8.6
Textiles; clothing and footwear	56.7	23.0	80.7	*	63.2	30.7	94.2	*
Paper, paper products, printing and publishing	45.4	28.8	84.9	15.1	33.3	44.0	80.6	19.4
Chemical, petroleum and coal products	36.2	32.5	70.7	29.3	21.3	59.3	81.1	*
Metal products, machinery and equipment	62.3	22.1	85.6	14.4	49.3	37.3	88.3	11.7
Basic metal products	38.8	46.3	85.7	14.3	29.1	48.6	77.7	*
Fabricated metal products; other machinery and equipment	61.0	17.8	80.6	19.4	42.1	42.2	86.6	13.4
Transport equipment	80.0	13.6	94.0	6.0	75.2	20.4	96.0	*
Other	39.7	41.1	82.6	17.4	25.2	54.6	80.9	19.1
Electricity, gas and water	38.6	59.9	98.5	*	44.0	54.3	98.3	*
Construction	35.4	38.9	77.0	23.0	10.8	42.0	56.0	44.0
Wholesale trade	28.1	33.4	66.2	33.8	11.8	62.2	77.2	22.8
Retail trade	30.4	45.8	77.9	22.1	6.3	80.5	87.5	12.5
Transport and storage	55.1	31.5	90.6	9.4	47.2	29.7	79.3	*
Communication	99.8	*	99.9	*	99.6	*	99.9	*
Finance, property and business services	32.1	28.7	69.1	30.9	29.1	46.4	84.2	15.8
Public administration and defence	53.4	44.3	98.6	*	64.7	32.3	98.2	*
Community services	14.0	72.9	88.4	11.6	6.9	82.6	90.9	9.1
Recreation, personal and other services	31.6	46.6	81.1	18.9	27.3	56.5	85.2	*
<b>All industries</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>83.4</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>63.4</b>	<b>87.4</b>	<b>12.6</b>

(a) Includes small numbers of employees covered by unregistered collective agreements.

Source: Incidence of Awards, Australia, May 1985 (6315.0).