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TRADE UNION STATISTICS, AUSTRALIA 30 JUNE 1987

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MAIN FEATURES

At 30 June 1987 there were 316 trade unions with a total membership of 3,240,100 persons (or 55 per cent of all employees). At 30 June 1986 there were 326 trade unions with a total membership of 3,186,200 (or 55 per cent of all employees).

Of the 316 unions, 206 had less than 3,000 members, 4.4 per cent of total membership.

There were nine unions, 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 326 in 1986 to 316 in 1987 was due to eight unions being amalgamated with other unions, one union ceasing to operate and one union being deregistered.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The figures in this publication have been compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions in respect of their membership and State of operation as at 30 June 1987. The collection was changed to an end of June basis in 1985 to correspond with other statistics which are on a financial year basis.

Scope and coverage

2. Current lists of reporting trade unions are maintained by reference to lists used in previous years and to trade unions registered under the provisions of the various Federal and State industrial arbitration Acts, trade union Acts, etc.; from names of unions reported to be engaged in conciliation and arbitration proceedings, etc.; and from reports in trade journals, trade union and employer periodicals, newspapers and other publications. It should be noted that not all reporting trade unions are registered under the relevant Federal or State industrial arbitration legislation or State trade union Acts (see paragraph 11 below).

3. For trade unions that are branches of larger trade unions, only the larger organisation is counted to reduce the possibility of duplication in the figures of the number of unions and members. An interstate or federated trade union (i.e. a union with members in more than one State

or Territory) is treated as a separate union in each State or Territory in which it has members, but is counted only once in the Australian total (see Table 1). Unions with interstate associations which are not strictly branches of a common organisation are counted as separate unions in the totals for Australia.

4. The published number of reporting trade unions varies from year to year as a result of amalgamations of unions, unions ceasing to operate, new unions being formed, existing organisations changing their status such that it brings them within the scope of the definition of a trade union (see paragraph 5), and existing unions reporting for the first time.

Definitions

5. For the purpose of these statistics a *trade union* is defined as an organisation, consisting predominantly of employees, the principal activities of which include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members. Non-operating unions or branches, i.e. those with no members at the date of collection, are not included in the statistics.

6. *Membership of trade unions. Financial members* are dues paying members who are no more than 6 months in arrears in payment of dues. *The total number of members* includes all persons (financial, unfinancial, honorary, etc.) regarded by unions as members.

7. Persons who are members of more than one union cannot be separately identified and are therefore counted more than once in the totals. The extent of this duplication is not known. Members of unions who work overseas are excluded from the reported membership data. Membership figures may be affected by differences in the concept of membership adopted by different unions or by the same union at different times (See paragraph 9 below).

8. *Proportion of total employees.* The approximate percentages of wage and salary earners in employment (i.e. employees) who were members of trade unions are shown in Table 3. From 30 June 1985, the proportions of employees have been calculated from estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings published in *Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia* (6248.0). These estimates of employees have been adjusted by adding estimates of employees in private sector agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and in private households employing staff, from the Labour Force Survey. Prior to 30 June 1985, estimates of employees from the *Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0),

have been used. The percentages shown should be regarded as giving only a broad indication of the extent of union membership among employees, because they are based on estimates of *employed* wage and salary earners and the degree of unemployment of reported union members will affect the percentages for a particular year and comparisons over time.

Comparability of series

9. Comparability of figures for different years may be affected by a number of factors. As stated in paragraph 7, there may be duplication in the count of members. This duplication may vary over time. Union rules on membership may follow different concepts and practices and this may be reflected in the level and fluctuations of the figures reported. Unions reported financial and total membership separately for the first time as at 30 June 1985, in previous years some unions confined their reported membership to 'financial' members whilst others included various other members. Individual unions may or may not include in their reported membership unemployed members, members who have retired from the labour force, disabled members, members with dues in arrears (who may be kept on union books for varying lengths of time), etc.

10. Membership of trade unions is shown separately for males and females for each State and Territory. The subdivision of total membership into males and females is not precise because some trade unions are unable to state the exact number of males and females among their members. The subdivision of total membership by States and Territories is also not precise because some unions in the Territories are affiliated with State organisations and their membership is reported under the heading of that State.

Organisations registered under industrial arbitration legislation

11. Details of employee organisations registered under the *Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904* as at 30 June 1987 (with comparable figures for 30 June 1986 shown in brackets) are: 144 (146) employee unions with membership of 2,650,600 (2,571,500) representing 82 (81) per cent of total membership of all reporting trade unions in Australia.

12. Industrial legislation in most States also provides for the registration of employee associations. Some employee associations are registered under more than one Act.

Related publications

13. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Industrial disputes, Australia (6322.0) — issued annually

Industrial Disputes, Australia (6321.0) — issued monthly

Labour Statistics, Australia, 1986 (6101.0)

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0) — issued monthly

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0) — issued quarterly

Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1986 (6325.0)

Unpublished statistics

14. In some cases, the ABS can also make available information which is not published. This information may be made available in one or more of the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, data tape, computer printout, clerically-extracted tabulation. Generally, a charge is made for providing unpublished information. Inquiries should be made to the officer whose name appears in the *Phone Inquiries* section of the inquiries box at the front of this publication, or to Information Services in the nearest ABS office.

15. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

— Break in continuity of series

16. Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Electronic services

VIATEL. Key *656# for selected current economic, social and demographic statistics.

AUSSTATS. Thousands of up-to-date time series are available on this ABS on-line service through CSIRONET.

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Further information is available on (062) 52 5404.

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Selected ABS statistics are available on floppy disk. Further information is available on (062) 52 6684.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS

	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>N.T.</i>	<i>A.C.T.</i>	<i>Aust.(a)</i>
31 December									
1982	187	175	142	143	148	124	78	93	322
1983	186	174	138	141	146	123	75	92	319
1984	190	179	138	142	148	127	75	89	329
30 June									
1985	183	177	138	143	146	130	76	83	323
1986	182	176	141	144	147	135	78	87	326
1987	186	159	137	137	140	129	76	79	316

(a) Australian totals do not equal the sum of the States and Territories, see paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 2. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS
(' 000)

	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>N.T.</i>	<i>A.C.T.</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
MALES									
31 December									
1982	745.7	533.4	296.0	176.0	161.2	61.4	13.7	36.9	2,024.4
1983	730.6	529.1	299.6	174.3	162.2	61.1	13.9	36.4	2,007.2
1984	741.4	545.5	300.9	171.5	166.2	62.2	13.6	40.0	2,041.2
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	660.0	488.3	283.3	161.0	148.9	57.5	11.1	37.2	1,847.4
Total	756.2	568.0	328.8	183.2	166.3	64.1	13.9	41.2	2,121.6
1986—Financial	664.4	527.4	270.6	162.1	152.4	60.9	11.4	42.9	1,892.1
Total	757.0	586.9	309.7	178.7	167.8	65.2	13.9	47.2	2,126.5
1987—Financial	673.6	515.8	260.5	166.2	152.1	61.9	11.6	38.7	1,880.5
Total	772.2	578.4	305.2	184.3	170.8	67.1	13.6	44.4	2,136.0
FEMALES									
31 December									
1982	381.9	256.7	142.7	82.7	73.3	26.7	6.5	17.5	988.0
1983	378.1	259.1	130.6	83.5	75.3	27.6	6.7	17.2	978.0
1984	373.1	260.5	133.9	87.0	78.0	29.1	6.8	18.9	987.3
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	357.0	269.0	113.7	85.7	74.4	29.4	7.0	19.2	955.4
Total	392.7	290.5	124.1	89.9	78.2	29.8	7.4	20.0	1,032.6
1986—Financial	357.0	277.6	123.6	85.8	80.8	28.8	6.2	18.7	978.4
Total	391.3	299.5	137.7	89.7	84.4	29.2	7.3	20.5	1,059.7
1987—Financial	400.4	279.1	139.0	82.1	76.3	28.9	5.9	16.9	1,028.7
Total	433.5	297.3	151.1	86.6	80.9	29.4	6.6	18.8	1,104.2
PERSONS									
31 December									
1982	1,127.5	790.1	438.8	258.7	234.5	88.1	20.2	54.4	3,012.4
1983	1,108.7	788.2	430.2	257.8	237.5	88.6	20.6	53.6	2,985.2
1984	1,114.5	806.0	434.8	258.4	244.2	91.3	20.3	58.9	3,028.5
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	1,016.9	757.4	397.1	246.8	223.3	86.9	18.1	56.3	2,802.8
Total	1,148.9	858.5	452.9	273.1	244.5	93.9	21.3	61.2	3,154.2
1986—Financial	1,021.4	805.0	394.1	247.9	233.2	89.7	17.5	61.6	2,870.5
Total	1,148.2	886.4	447.5	268.5	252.2	94.4	21.2	67.7	3,186.2
1987—Financial	1,074.0	794.9	399.6	248.4	228.3	90.8	17.5	55.6	2,909.2
Total	1,205.8	875.7	456.3	270.9	251.7	96.5	20.2	63.1	3,240.1

(a) See paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

**TABLE 3. TRADE UNION MEMBERS : PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES(a)
(per cent)**

	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>N.T.</i>	<i>A.C.T.</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
MALES									
31 December(b)									
1982	64	61	59	63	55	70	41	71	62
1983	65	61	59	62	55	68	43	64	61
1984	64	60	60	60	55	68	42	66	61
30 June(c)(d)									
1985	67	65	65	65	57	72	44	67	65
1986	66	63	61	63	55	71	40	73	63
1987	66	63	61	66	55	73	36	69	63
FEMALES									
31 December(b)									
1982	53	46	48	46	40	52	32	45	48
1983	52	46	43	46	40	55	33	39	47
1984	48	44	43	46	40	53	35	40	45
30 June(c)(d)									
1985	51	47	39	46	39	51	33	38	46
1986	48	44	41	45	39	47	26	38	44
1987	51	42	44	41	35	44	27	32	44
PERSONS									
31 December(b)									
1982	60	55	55	56	50	63	38	60	56
1983	60	55	53	56	49	63	39	53	56
1984	57	54	53	55	49	62	39	55	55
30 June(c)(d)									
1985	60	57	55	57	49	64	39	54	57
1986	58	55	53	55	48	61	34	57	55
1987	59	54	54	55	46	61	33	51	55

(a) The method used to estimate total employees has been amended. For details see paragraph 8 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Based on estimates of employees from the Labour Force Survey. (c) See paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series. (d) Based on estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings.

TABLE 4. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF STATES AND/OR TERRITORIES OF OPERATION, AUSTRALIA

	<i>One</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>Three</i>	<i>Four</i>	<i>Five</i>	<i>Six or more</i>	<i>Two or more</i>	<i>Total all States</i>
NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS								
31 December								
1982	178	11	3	12	16	102	144	322
1983	176	11	5	11	15	101	143	319
1984	186	12	3	11	17	100	143	329
30 June								
1985	183	8	3	12	15	102	140	323
1986	187	6	3	13	14	103	139	326
1987	181	8	3	13	13	98	135	316
NUMBER OF MEMBERS ('000)								
31 December								
1982	502.9	21.2	55.7	132.2	135.4	2,165.0	2,509.5	3,012.4
1983	531.9	22.9	56.3	132.1	133.6	2,108.5	2,453.3	2,985.2
1984	540.7	23.9	53.7	138.7	143.2	2,128.4	2,487.9	3,028.5
30 June(a)								
1985	541.7	20.9	52.7	142.4	208.7	2,187.7	2,612.5	3,154.2
1986	540.3	20.1	54.4	94.0	179.5	2,297.8	2,645.8	3,186.2
1987	587.1	23.4	19.4	121.2	185.4	2,303.7	2,653.0	3,240.1

(a) See paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

TABLE 5. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF UNIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

Number of members	Number of unions					1987		
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	Number of unions	Per cent of total unions	Cumulative per cent of total unions
Under 100	46	41	41	35	40	40	12.7	12.7
100 and under 250	38	39	45	42	40	39	12.3	25.0
250 and under 500	25	25	24	30	32	25	7.9	32.9
500 and under 1,000	43	47	52	47	43	45	14.2	47.2
1,000 and under 2,000	45	41	41	41	45	44	13.9	61.1
2,000 and under 3,000	41	41	40	41	39	13	4.1	65.2
3,000 and under 5,000						25	7.9	73.1
5,000 and under 10,000	21	21	22	22	23	21	6.6	79.7
10,000 and under 20,000	21	22	20	21	19	17	5.4	85.1
20,000 and under 30,000	9	13	13	10	12	14	4.4	89.6
30,000 and under 40,000	10	7	6	7	7	6	1.9	91.5
40,000 and under 50,000	9	8	11	10	10	8	2.5	94.0
50,000 and under 80,000	6	5	4	7	8	10	3.2	97.2
80,000 and over	8	9	10	10	8	9	2.8	100.0
Total	322	319	329	323	326	316	100.0	

TABLE 6. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNIONS, AUSTRALIA

Number of members	Number of members ('000)						1987		
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	Average number of members per union	Per cent of total members	Cumulative per cent of total members
Under 100	2.5	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.0	1.9	47	0.1	0.1
100 and under 250	6.1	6.0	7.0	6.7	6.6	6.6	170	0.2	0.3
250 and under 500	9.1	8.9	8.4	10.7	11.8	9.1	364	0.3	0.5
500 and under 1,000	28.8	33.9	37.2	33.9	31.1	32.0	711	1.0	1.5
1,000 and under 2,000	61.3	52.7	56.8	56.1	63.0	60.0	1,363	1.9	3.4
2,000 and under 3,000	132.0	132.0	127.3	128.9	130.1	31.7	2,438	1.0	4.4
3,000 and under 5,000						101.9	4,077	3.1	7.5
5,000 and under 10,000	147.3	149.3	156.1	149.4	158.8	149.9	7,138	4.6	12.1
10,000 and under 20,000	305.6	328.1	289.5	301.3	275.0	234.4	13,790	7.2	19.4
20,000 and under 30,000	207.4	315.2	307.3	234.8	294.6	338.0	24,140	10.4	29.8
30,000 and under 40,000	354.6	254.7	207.1	242.1	251.3	203.3	33,890	6.3	36.1
40,000 and under 50,000	402.7	363.2	495.7	452.3	455.8	366.5	45,809	11.3	47.4
50,000 and under 80,000	405.6	320.9	244.5	408.6	529.4	618.9	61,891	19.1	66.5
80,000 and over	949.4	1,013.4	1,089.5	1,127.7	976.8	1,085.9	120,660	33.5	100.0
Total	3,012.4	2,985.2	3,028.5	3,154.2	3,186.2	3,240.1	10,254	100.0	

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