



AUSTRALIAN HOTELS ASSOCIATION

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MEDIA RELEASE

3 June, 2009

HOTELS WON'T BEND TO UNION BULLY-BOY TACTICS

Today's hotel protest in Brisbane by the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union (LHMU) shows the difficulties the Rudd Labor Government has in dragging the trade union movement in a 21st century economy.

In the middle of the ACTU conference, this union has continued its American-funded campaign of misinformation to suggest that enterprise agreements being negotiated by major hotels at the enterprise level are in some way sub-standard.

The suggestion that it is possible to make sub-standard agreements is an affront to the Rudd Labor Government which, on being elected, moved quickly to put measures in place to ensure sub-standard agreements could not be approved.

"The hotel sector has got on and embraced the Government's goal of developing employment arrangements at the workplace level," said AHA National Chief Executive Officer Bill Healey.

"Employees have been engaged and the union has been able to play a role if it saw fit.

"The LHMU has declined offers to bargain with Sofitel Brisbane. This also occurred at other major hotels around the country, as the LHMU pursues a multi-employer national hotel agreement, rather than focusing on enterprise-level arrangements.

"We remain confident any agreement that has been negotiated in recent times has been done in accordance with legislation introduced by the new Government, which the LHMU acknowledges restored the balance and fairness of the workplace relations system.

"This is not about better conditions for hotel workers – it is about increasing union power and driving up membership.

"Unions have expected to be able to turn the clock back under the new laws to the days of central wage bargaining.

"They now know they can't do that and they're trying to embarrass the accommodation sector during an extremely difficult trading period.

"The hotel industry is committed to working with employees and the union to find ways of making our businesses more productive, but we won't bend to bully-boy tactics that were on display today.

"The Australian people will not support a government that bows to such pressure."

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The Australian Hotels Association (AHA) is the pre-eminent tourism and hospitality industry organisation in Australia. It has around 5000 members operating general and accommodation hotels. It has a national office and branches in each State and Territory. It also has a discrete branch to represent the interests of its accommodation members that covers four and five-star properties.