

# INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES AUSTRALIA

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11:30AM MON 19 AUGUST 1996

## MAY KEY FIGURES

	Apr 96	May 96	12 months ended May 96
Number of disputes	43	57	598
Number of employees ('000s)	74.2	185.6	496.0
Working days lost ('000s)	68.7	164.0	704.4
Working days lost per thousand employees	..	..	101

## MAY KEY POINTS

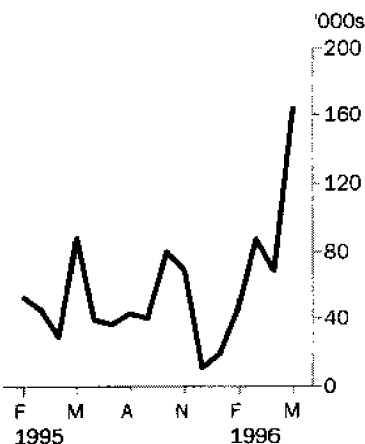
### MONTHLY ESTIMATES

- Australia lost a total of 164,000 working days which represented the highest number of working days lost since November 1992 (603,200). This was an increase of 139% over the number of working days lost last month.
- The Construction industry reported the most working days lost (96,900), which represented 59% of all working days lost during the month. This was the highest number of working days lost in this industry since November 1981 (119,200).
- On a State basis New South Wales recorded the highest number of working days lost (64,700) which represented 39% of working days lost in Australia. This was the highest number of working days lost for this State since November 1994 (72,900).
- Other States that reported a high level of disputation were Victoria with 30,700 and South Australia which reported 10,600 working days lost.

### ANNUAL ESTIMATES

- Industries that recorded the highest level of disputation for the year ended May 1996 were: Education; Health and community services with 219,400 and Construction with 137,500 working days lost.
- The Coal mining industry had the highest rate of working days lost per thousand employees (4,757), compared with the Mining (other than Coal) industry at 575.
- The Construction industry reported 371 working days lost per thousand employees for the twelve months ended May 1996. This is the highest number of working days lost per thousand employees for a twelve month period in this industry since the 394 reported for the year ended April 1990.
- On a State basis Western Australia had the highest rate of working days lost per thousand employees (166), with New South Wales second highest at 122.
- Western Australia also had the largest increase (50 to 166) in working days lost per thousand employees compared with the year ending May 1995.

### Working days lost



## INQUIRIES

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Henry Ferst on 03 9615 7980, or any ABS Office.

# NOTES

## FORTHCOMING ISSUES

<i>ISSUE</i>	<i>RELEASE DATE</i>
June 1996	18 September 1996
July 1996	18 October 1996
August 1996	18 November 1996

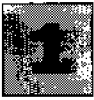
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## CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

Revisions have been made to the monthly series as the result of disputes which were identified after the release of the previous publication.

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W. McLennan  
Australian Statistician



## INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE PERIOD, Australia

NUMBER OF DISPUTES..... EMPLOYEES INVOLVED...

Period	Commenced in period	Total	Newly involved(a)	Total	Working days lost
	No.	No.	'000	'000	'000
<b>1993</b>	607	610	489.2	489.6	635.8
<b>1994</b>	556	560	263.4	265.1	501.6
<b>1995</b>	635	643	335.4	344.3	547.6
<b>1995</b>					
March	72	86	23.1	30.2	45.4
April	36	47	12.1	19.7	29.0
May	61	68	51.4	55.6	88.6
June	62	71	15.6	29.7	39.1
July	55	69	11.3	14.7	36.5
August	59	67	34.0	36.8	43.4
September	52	65	18.9	24.5	40.3
October	53	61	81.1	93.4	79.6
November	54	59	30.0	32.7	68.7
December	40	43	12.4	12.5	11.1
<b>1996</b>					
January	21	25	6.1	8.0	20.0
February	60	66	76.8	78.1	45.6
March	49	58	24.0	64.9	87.4
April	34	43	32.4	74.2	68.7
May	49	57	139.2	185.6	164.0
Twelve months ended -					
May 1994	543	550	322.9	348.2	552.5
May 1995	628	630	335.3	335.9	568.9
May 1996	588	598	481.8	496.0	704.4

(a) Comprises employees involved in disputes which commenced during the month and additional employees involved in disputes which continued from the previous month.

**WORKING DAYS LOST, By Industry—Australia**

Period	MINING.....		MANUFACTURING.....						
	Coal	Other	<i>Metal product; Machinery and equipment</i>		Const- ruction	Transport and storage; Communi- cation services	Education; Health and community services	Other industries(a)	All industries
			'000	'000					
<b>1993</b>	78.6	14.4	160.4	77.7	13.1	15.6	147.5	128.7	635.8
<b>1994</b>	151.0	18.3	45.4	78.3	20.2	59.4	73.8	55.2	501.6
<b>1995</b>	111.1	78.0	54.8	105.1	42.7	38.6	70.9	46.3	547.6
<b>1995</b>									
March	7.8	6.8	10.7	16.1	0.8	0.7	1.1	1.4	45.4
April	2.5	3.9	5.4	5.1	1.9	0.2	0.2	9.8	29.0
May	12.4	33.2	1.1	7.0	0.2	5.6	27.6	1.5	88.6
June	4.4	1.1	1.9	6.3	7.4	2.3	12.9	2.8	39.1
July	7.6	3.2	0.8	14.3	2.9	1.7	0.8	5.3	36.5
August	7.5	8.5	2.7	8.2	1.3	2.0	5.8	7.4	43.4
September	6.2	8.3	1.1	6.5	0.2	0.3	13.0	4.8	40.3
October	5.3	5.2	10.3	27.7	12.0	13.6	2.4	3.1	79.6
November	43.4	2.0	7.0	4.8	0.0	6.3	4.2	1.0	68.7
December	3.9	1.4	2.0	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.0	2.5	11.1
<b>1996</b>									
January	2.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	10.9	0.1	1.4	5.3	20.0
February	8.8	2.1	2.1	2.7	2.8	2.1	17.5	7.6	45.6
March	8.3	0.7	0.3	1.4	2.3	5.3	62.6	6.5	87.4
April	13.1	0.7	0.1	1.4	0.4	0.3	46.3	6.4	68.7
May	6.2	0.0	1.7	2.8	96.9	1.8	52.6	2.2	164.0
Twelve months ended -									
May 1994	163.8	14.7	53.6	65.8	16.2	20.5	98.2	119.9	552.5
May 1995	80.0	62.7	65.3	106.0	34.7	59.5	100.6	60.1	568.9
May 1996	116.9	33.1	30.1	76.0	137.5	36.6	219.4	54.9	704.4

(a) Comprises: Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Electricity, gas and water supply; Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation, cafes and restaurants; Finance and insurance; Property and business services; Government administration and defence; Cultural and recreational services; Personal and other services.

## WORKING DAYS LOST

Period	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Australian Capital Territory	Australia
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
<b>1993</b>	178.3	257.2	128.4	25.6	29.5	4.5	2.1	10.3	635.8
<b>1994</b>	223.2	87.0	133.3	18.0	27.4	4.6	7.0	1.1	501.6
<b>1995</b>	113.6	126.1	182.7	15.3	101.6	3.5	3.6	1.2	547.6
<b>1995</b>									
March	8.9	10.0	20.9	1.7	1.0	0.5	2.4	0.0	45.4
April	5.2	13.3	9.4	0.2	0.8	0.1	0.0	0.0	29.0
May	10.0	19.1	45.2	2.7	11.2	0.2	0.0	0.1	88.6
June	6.6	17.9	9.3	1.5	3.1	0.7	0.0	0.0	39.1
July	3.0	7.0	19.3	1.2	5.1	0.8	0.0	0.0	36.5
August	13.3	16.1	4.0	0.1	9.7	0.1	0.0	0.0	43.4
September	6.9	10.6	4.7	0.0	17.0	0.1	0.6	0.3	40.3
October	6.7	14.5	10.4	0.2	47.6	0.0	0.0	0.3	79.6
November	38.3	4.8	22.9	1.0	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	68.7
December	5.5	1.8	3.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	11.1
<b>1996</b>									
January	2.7	1.1	2.6	0.3	12.4	0.8	0.0	0.2	20.0
February	21.5	7.4	4.7	3.9	3.9	0.1	1.4	2.7	45.6
March	59.1	11.6	5.4	10.0	1.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	87.4
April	60.3	3.1	2.9	0.6	1.4	0.1	0.2	0.0	68.7
May	64.7	30.7	44.0	10.6	9.9	0.2	1.7	2.2	164.0
Twelve months ended -									
May 1994	197.2	143.0	140.7	18.1	35.1	5.0	2.5	11.0	552.5
May 1995	166.5	130.2	199.1	24.7	33.1	5.0	9.4	0.8	568.9
May 1996	288.5	126.7	133.7	29.4	112.9	3.2	4.2	5.7	704.4

## WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES, By Industry: Australia-12 months ended

Twelve months ended	MINING.....		MANUFACTURING.....		Const- ruction	Transport and storage; Communi- cation services	Education; Health and community services	Other industries(a)	All industries
	Coal	Other	Metal product; Machinery and equipment	Other					
<b>1995</b>									
March	3 567	479	164	158	98	123	65	16	75
April	2 964	540	172	164	99	121	63	17	74
May	3 389	1 078	167	164	96	132	83	17	84
June	3 124	1 089	166	159	105	137	94	17	86
July	3 327	1 138	157	164	111	132	93	14	85
August	3 116	1 269	139	166	114	127	97	16	86
September	3 241	1 407	131	173	109	100	107	16	87
October	3 271	1 407	134	197	123	111	106	16	91
November	4 877	1 428	142	166	122	118	58	15	85
December	4 660	1 359	142	160	115	84	57	12	79
<b>1996</b>									
January	4 484	1 343	137	159	144	74	57	14	80
February	4 543	1 319	117	151	109	77	70	14	79
March	4 561	1 212	90	129	114	87	119	15	85
April	5 011	1 152	75	125	110	87	153	14	90
May	4 757	575	77	118	371	78	173	15	101
May 1992	4 379	825	1 203	258	318	220	148	64	221
May 1993	2 854	545	598	213	109	189	199	56	162
May 1994	5 824	262	139	103	50	48	69	37	85

(a) Comprises: Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Electricity, gas and water supply; Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation, cafes and restaurants; Finance and insurance; Property and business services; Government administration and defence; Cultural and recreational services; Personal and other services.

## WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES—12 months ended

Twelve months ended	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Australian Capital Territory	Australia
<b>1995</b>									
March	75	62	132	47	44	34	141	6	75
April	71	68	131	46	43	30	132	5	74
May	72	76	166	46	50	31	132	6	84
June	73	87	159	48	48	35	117	6	86
July	69	80	171	44	54	38	113	5	85
August	67	87	163	44	66	33	112	5	86
September	67	86	164	42	88	30	119	7	87
October	64	84	157	41	156	30	52	9	91
November	50	81	161	32	157	30	49	8	85
December	48	72	148	28	150	22	48	9	79
<b>1996</b>									
January	48	71	145	28	166	24	48	10	80
February	55	70	126	24	168	23	60	26	79
March	76	71	114	39	168	20	32	26	85
April	99	65	108	40	168	20	34	25	90
May	122	72	107	55	166	19	57	40	101
May 1992	427	118	104	85	142	181	39	27	221
May 1993	95	415	68	42	64	104	21	5	162
May 1994	90	87	125	35	56	32	38	79	85

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, Australia—12 months ended May 1996(a)

	<i>Number of disputes</i>	<i>Employees involved (directly and indirectly)</i>	<i>Working days lost</i>
	No.	'000	'000

CAUSE OF DISPUTE

Wages	79	132.9	276.5
Leave, pensions, compensation	14	3.8	8.0
Managerial policy	310	178.3	247.2
Physical working conditions	89	15.6	29.2
Trade unionism	62	14.5	17.8
Hours of work	10	1.0	2.1
Other	31	150.8	140.8
Total	595	497.0	721.6

DURATION OF DISPUTE

Up to and including 1 day	326	314.9	235.3
Over 1 and up to and including 2 days	154	79.4	116.0
Over 2 and less than 5 days	76	95.2	264.9
5 and less than 10 days	26	3.9	25.0
10 and less than 20 days	9	2.3	33.1
20 days and over	4	1.2	47.3
Total	595	497.0	721.6

METHOD OF SETTLEMENT

Negotiation	93	19.7	42.3
State legislation	22	3.8	14.4
Federal and joint Federal-State legislation	55	32.0	110.8
Resumption without negotiation	422	441.5	553.9
Other methods	3	0.1	0.3
Total	595	497.0	721.6

(a) includes only industrial disputes which ended during the year.



# EXPLANATORY NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

**1** The statistics in this publication relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work of ten working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred. Ten working days is equivalent to the amount of ordinary time worked by ten people in one day, regardless of the length of the stoppage, for example, 3,000 workers on strike for 2 hours would be counted as 750 working days lost (assuming they work an 8 hour day).

**2** The statistics of working days lost relate to the losses due to industrial disputes only (see the definition of 'Disputes' in the Glossary). Effects on other establishments, such as stand-downs because of lack of materials, disruption of transport services, power cuts, etc. are not included.

**3** The statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector), from trade unions and from reports of government authorities. Particulars of some stoppages, e.g. State or Australia wide general strikes may have been estimated and the statistics therefore should be regarded as giving only a broad measure of the extent of industrial disputes as defined above.

## TYPE OF DISPUTE

**4** Included in these statistics are the following types of industrial disputes:

- unauthorised stopwork meetings;
- unofficial strikes;
- sympathetic strikes (e.g. strikes in support of a group of workers already on strike);
- political or protest strikes;
- general strikes;
- work stoppages initiated by employers (e.g. lockouts); and
- rotating or revolving strikes (i.e. strikes which occur when workers at different locations take turns to stop work).

Excluded from these statistics are work-to-rules, go-slows, bans (e.g. overtime bans) and sit-ins. In addition, industrial disputes in which employees resign are deemed to have been resolved. Statistics on those disputes will cease to be collected from the date of the employees' resignations.

## CHANGE IN METHODOLOGY

**5** The basis for the calculation of working days lost per thousand employees was changed in the January 1995 edition of this publication to use estimates of employees taken from the ABS Labour Force Survey only. Estimates have been recalculated on this basis for each 12 monthly period back to December 1990 and are available on request. For the January 1987 to December 1994 editions of this publication, estimates of employees were taken predominantly from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings (*Employed Wage and Salary Earners* (6248.0)).

**6** The basis for the calculation of the number of disputes was changed in the November 1992 publication and the series revised back to September 1991. Prior to September 1991, disputes affecting more than one industry and/or State were counted as a separate dispute in each industry and State and in the Australian total. From September 1991 onwards, a dispute affecting more than one industry and/or State is counted once in each industry and/or State, but only once at the broader industry and Australia level. The reason for the change was to align the method of counting the number of industrial disputes with the International Labour Organisation guidelines. This change does not affect the estimates of employees involved or working days lost.

# EXPLANATORY NOTES

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- INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION**      **7** Industry information on a monthly basis from January 1994 and on an annual basis from December 1994 is classified according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) — for more details refer to *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification, 1993*, (1292.0). It replaces the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) which had been in use for many years. Data for periods prior to January 1994 for monthly data and December 1994 for annual data have been classified only according to ASIC.
- RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES**      **8** Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in information provided by respondents or in processing by the ABS. Although considerable care is taken in questionnaire design, in the instructions given to respondents, and in editing the returns, these inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample.
- RELATED PUBLICATIONS**      **9** Users may also wish to refer to the following publications and standard data services which are available from ABS Bookshops:
- *Industrial Disputes, Australia, 1994* (6322.0.40.001) — standard data service
  - *Labour Statistics, Australia* (6101.0) — issued annually
  - *Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0) — issued monthly
  - *Trade Union Statistics, Australia* (6323.0.40.001) — standard data service
  - *Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1994* (6325.0.40.001) — standard data service
  - *Working Arrangements, Australia, August 1995* (6342.0.40.001) — standard data service
- 10** Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.
- UNPUBLISHED STATISTICS**      **11** A range of unpublished data is also available on request including dispute details at more detailed industry levels, cross-classified by State/Territory, and finer cause of dispute and method of settlement categories than those published. Considerable time series exist for most variables. Inquiries regarding data availability and the associated charges should be directed to Henry Ferst on 03 9615 7980.
- SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES**      ... not applicable
- 12** Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.
- FLOPPY DISK SERVICE**      **13** Selected ABS statistics are available on floppy disk. Further information is available on (06) 252 6684.

**Cause of dispute** The statistics for cause of industrial disputes relate to the reported main cause of stoppage of work and not necessarily all causes that may have been responsible for the stoppage of work. For these reasons, the statistics do not reflect the relative importance of all causes of disputes as perceived by both employers and employees. The causes are classified from information supplied by employers and according to standards determined by the International Labour Organisation. The classification of causes is as follows:

*Wages.* Claims involving general principles relating to wages e.g. increase (decrease) in wages; variation in method of payment or combined claims relating to wages, hours or conditions of work in which the claim about wages is deemed to be the most important. Combined claims in which the other claims are deemed to be the most important are included under the relevant clause. Disputes over award restructuring are included under managerial policy.

*Leave, pensions, compensation.* Claims involving general principles relating to holidays and leave provisions; pension and retirement provisions; workers' compensation provisions; insertion of penal clause provisions in awards.

*Managerial policy.* Disputes concerning the exercise of managerial control by employers, e.g. terms and conditions of employment (other than disputes specifically about wages and hours); new awards and agreements; award restructuring; work practices; principles of promotion or deployment of staff including roster complaints and retrenchments; disciplinary matters including alleged victimisation of union officials; employment of particular persons; disagreement with managerial decisions.

*Physical working conditions.* Disputes concerning physical working conditions and safety issues, e.g. protective clothing and equipment; first aid services; uncomfortable working conditions; lack of, or the condition of, amenities; claims for assistance; shortage or poor distribution of equipment or material; condition of equipment; new production methods and equipment, arduous physical tasks.

*Trade unionism.* Disputes concerning employment of non-unionists, inter-union and intra-union disputes; sympathy stoppages in support of employees in another industry; recognition of union activities.

*Hours of work.* Claims involving general principles relating to hours of work, e.g. decrease (increase) in hours, distribution of hours.

*Other.* Disputes concerning protests directed against persons or situations other than those relating to the employer/employee relationship, e.g. political matters; fining and jailing of persons; lack of work; lack of adequate transport; non-award public holidays; accidents and attendance at funerals. Stoppages for which no reason is given are also included in this category.

## GLOSSARY

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**Disputes** For these statistics, an *industrial dispute* is defined as a withdrawal from work by a group of employees, or a refusal by an employer or a number of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work, each withdrawal or refusal being made in order to enforce a demand, to resist a demand, or to express a grievance.

A dispute affecting several establishments is counted as a single dispute if it is organised or directed by one person or organisation; otherwise it is counted as a separate dispute at each establishment (in each State or Territory) and in each industry in which it occurred.

A dispute affecting more than one industry and/or State is counted once in each industry and State but only once at the broader industry and Australia level. Prior to September 1991 disputes covering more than one industry and/or State were counted differently (refer to paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes for details).

When there is a return to work between stoppages over the same issue, and the return to work is for less than two complete months, the stoppages are counted as a single dispute. When the return to work is for two or more months, the dispute is considered to have ended at the time of the return to work. Should a subsequent stoppage occur, it is counted as a new dispute.

**Disputes which occurred during the period**

*Disputes which occurred during the period* encompasses those disputes which:

- started in a previous month or year and ended in the reference period, or
- began and ended in the reference period, or
- began in the reference period and continued into the next period, or
- started prior to the reference month or year, continued through the reference period and into the next period.

**Duration of dispute**

The *duration* of a dispute is the average number of working days lost per employee involved in the dispute. The duration of the dispute is calculated by dividing the number of working days lost in the dispute by the number of employees involved (both directly and indirectly).

**Employees**

*Employees* refers to wage and salary earners only. Excluded are persons who are self-employed (e.g. building sub-contractors, owner-drivers of trucks) and employers.

*Employees directly involved* are those who actually participated in the dispute in order to enforce or resist a demand or to express a grievance.

*Employees indirectly involved* are those who ceased work at the establishment where the stoppages occurred, but who are not themselves parties to the dispute. Employees who ceased work at establishments other than those where the stoppages occurred are excluded (see paragraph 2 of the Explanatory Notes).

## GLOSSARY

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### Employees (continued)

*Total employees involved* for any period of time are obtained by adding together the number of employees involved in each dispute in the period. For any period of time the figures may include details of the same employees involved in more than one dispute. The longer the period of reference, the more chance there is of some double counting in the number of employees involved. Where there are varying numbers of employees involved during the progress of a dispute, the figures of employees involved relate to the largest number of individual employees involved on any one day. Generally, the *total* number of employees involved for each year will equal the sum of the total number of employees involved in the first month of a year plus the number of employees *newly* involved in subsequent months. Differences between monthly and annual totals can occur due to the temporary cessation of stoppages which resume in subsequent months. Employees re-involved in this type of dispute are not classified as employees *newly* involved in stoppages in the second period in which the dispute occurs.

### Method of Settlement

Statistics of the *method of settlement* of industrial disputes relate to the method directly responsible for ending the stoppage of work as reported and not necessarily to the method (or methods) responsible for settling all matters in dispute. For these reasons, they do not reflect the relative importance of the work of various industrial tribunals operating under State and Federal legislation. The classification of method of settlement is as follows:

*Negotiation.* Private negotiation between the parties involved, or their representatives, without the intervention or assistance of authorities constituted under State or Federal industrial legislation.

*State legislation.* Intervention or assistance of an industrial authority or authorities created by or constituted under State conciliation and arbitration or wages board legislation, or reference to such authorities or compulsory or voluntary conference. Intervention, assistance or advice of State government officials or inspectors.

*Federal and joint Federal-State legislation.* Compulsory or voluntary conference or by intervention or assistance of, or reference to, the industrial relation commissions created by or constituted under the Industrial Relations Act, Coal Industry Acts, Stevedoring Industry Act, and other acts such as the Navigation Act; Public Service Arbitration Act. Intervention, assistance or advice of Federal government officials or inspectors.

*Resumption without negotiation.* This category may include some disputes which are settled subject to subsequent negotiation of a formal nature, such as industrial court hearings. Stop-work meetings are included, and this category may also include disputes settled by 'resumption' as stated, but about which no further information is available.

*Other methods.* Mediation; filling places of employees on strike or locked out; closing establishments permanently; dismissal or resignation of employees.

### Working days lost

*Working days lost* refers to working days lost by employees directly and indirectly involved in the dispute and figures are generally as reported by parties to the dispute. For some disputes working days lost are estimated on the basis of the number of employees involved and the duration of the dispute.

## GLOSSARY

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**Working days lost per  
thousand employees**

*Working days lost per thousand employees* are calculated for the 12 month period from working days lost and estimates of employees obtained from the ABS Labour Force Survey. Refer to paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the way in which these measures are calculated, and the change in the method of calculation from the January 1995 edition of this publication.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

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