



Reference No. 6.24

TRADE UNION STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA
DECEMBER 1973

MAIN FEATURES

- At the end of 1973 there were 294 reporting trade unions in Australia with a membership of 2,659,900 persons (1,904,900 males and 755,000 females) compared with 305 unions with a membership of 2,523,700 persons at the end of 1972.
- At the end of 1973 the 10 largest unions accounted for almost 40 per cent of total union membership.
- Approximately 54 per cent of total wage and salary earners were members of trade unions at the end of 1973, compared with 53 per cent at the end of the previous year.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The figures contained in this annual bulletin have been compiled from data obtained from questionnaires sent to individual trade unions in the annual collection of membership of trade unions as at 31 December 1973. For comparison, figures for some earlier years are also shown. More detailed statistics for earlier years and a description of these series appear in the *Labour Report* and the *Official Year Book*.

2. For the purpose of these statistics a trade union is defined as an organisation consisting predominantly of employees and whose principal activities include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members.

3. Current lists of reporting trade unions are maintained by reference to lists of reporting trade unions used in previous years; by reference 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.; from reports of trade unions 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 relevant Federal or State industrial arbitration legislation or State trade union acts.

4. The published number of reporting trade unions varies from year to year as a result of amalgamations and mergers 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 2); and existing unions reporting for the first time. These variations generally have little or no effect on total membership figures. Between 1972 and 1973 the number of reporting trade unions decreased from 305 to 294. This change was the result of (i) a number of amalgamations or mergers that resulted in 17 unions being reduced to 7 unions; (ii) 3 unions ceasing to operate; and (iii) 2 existing unions with approximately 2,500 members reporting for the first time.

5. The total membership of the reporting trade unions represents the aggregate of the membership of individual unions; persons who are members of more than one union are therefore counted more than once in the totals. The extent of this duplication is not known and it may vary over time. Total reported membership figures are affected by differences in the concept of membership adopted by various unions or by the same union at different times. Union rules on membership may follow different concepts and practices and this may be reflected in the level and fluctuations of the figures reported. Some unions confine their reported membership to "financial" members whilst others may also include "unfinancial" members. Individual unions may or may not include in their reported membership unemployed members, members who have retired from the work force, disabled members, members with dues in arrears (who may be kept on union books for varying lengths of time), etc. Members of unions working overseas (e.g. Papua New Guinea) are excluded from the reported membership data.

6. Membership of trade unions is shown separately for males and females for each State and Territory. The subdivision of the 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. More accurate reporting of membership by location by trade unions over the years is reflected in the annual figures for the Territories and this affects their comparability over time.

7. Interstate or federated trade unions are those unions which have members in more than one State. The larger interstate unions are usually administered by both

TABLE 1. - TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP, STATES

<i>End of December -</i>	<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. (a)</i>	<i>A.C.T. (a)</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS (b)									
1972	198	158	138	132	151	112	55	84	(c)305
1973	192	159	140	135	154	118	58	87	(c)294
NUMBER OF MEMBERS ('000)									
1972 -									
Males	713.5	461.2	248.4	171.6	135.7	60.6	8.8	27.7	1,827.4
Females	274.8	190.9	95.1	52.1	49.1	19.9	2.3	12.0	696.2
Persons	988.4	652.1	343.5	223.7	184.8	80.5	11.1	39.7	2,523.7
1973 -									
Males	735.8	484.7	254.2	181.6	142.6	62.5	10.2	33.3	1,904.9
Females	296.2	196.8	107.9	60.2	54.8	21.6	3.2	14.2	755.0
Persons	1,032.0	681.6	362.1	241.8	197.4	84.1	13.5	47.5	2,659.9

(a) See paragraph 6, page 1. (b) See paragraph 4, page 1. (c) Without interstate duplication. See paragraph 7, page 1.

Proportion of total wage and salary earners. Tables 2 and 3 below show the approximate percentages of wage and salary earners in employment who were members of trade unions. The estimates of total wage and salary earners have been derived by adding figures for employees in rural industries and in private domestic service recorded at the 1966 Population Census to the estimates of employees in all other industries as at the end of each year. The percentages shown in these tables are not directly comparable with those shown in *Labour Report* No. 53, 1967 and earlier issues of the *Labour Report*, because the present percentages are based on a revised series of employment estimates available only as from June 1966. The change between the series is more significant for female employees as the current employment estimates include a considerable number of part-time employees who had previously been excluded.

TABLE 2. - TRADE UNIONS : PROPORTION OF TOTAL WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS
DECEMBER 1973

<i>State</i>	<i>Number of members ('000)</i>			<i>Proportion of total wage and salary earners (per cent)</i>		
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
New South Wales and A.C.T.	769.0	310.5	1,079.5	63	46	57
Victoria	484.7	196.8	681.6	55	39	50
Queensland	254.2	107.9	362.1	56	49	54
South Australia	181.6	60.2	241.8	62	38	53
Western Australia	142.6	54.8	197.4	58	41	52
Tasmania	62.5	21.6	84.1	65	48	59
Northern Territory	10.2	3.2	13.5	44	28	38
Australia	1,904.9	755.0	2,659.9	59	43	54

TABLE 3. - TRADE UNIONS : PROPORTION OF TOTAL WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, AUSTRALIA

<i>End of December -</i>	<i>Number of members ('000)</i>			<i>Proportion of total wage and salary earners (per cent)</i>		
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
1966	1,657.5	466.0	2,123.5	60	37	53
1967	1,663.7	487.6	2,151.3	59	37	52
1968	1,691.1	499.5	2,190.7	59	36	51
1969	1,717.5	521.6	2,239.1	58	36	50
1970	1,750.6	564.1	2,314.6	57	36	50
1971	1,818.2	618.3	2,436.6	59	39	52
1972	1,827.4	696.2	2,523.7	58	43	53
1973	1,904.9	755.0	2,659.9	59	43	54

TABLE 4. - TRADE UNIONS : CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF MEMBERS, AUSTRALIA

Number of members	Number of separate unions (a)				Number of members ('000)			
	Dec. 1970	Dec. 1971	Dec. 1972	Dec. 1973	Dec. 1970	Dec. 1971	Dec. 1972	Dec. 1973
Under 100	41	39	42	35	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.9
100 and under 250	39	40	42	34	6.4	6.9	7.1	5.6
250 " " 500	39	33	36	34	14.4	12.1	13.6	12.4
500 " " 1,000	33	38	38	37	22.3	26.9	28.2	26.0
1,000 " " 2,000	46	42	37	45	64.8	60.9	52.6	63.0
2,000 " " 5,000	40	45	45	41	136.7	149.8	148.3	135.4
5,000 " " 10,000	13	12	12	16	88.4	85.8	85.2	116.7
10,000 " " 20,000	21	17	16	15	304.9	238.6	216.1	212.8
20,000 " " 30,000	7	11	12	11	158.1	255.7	279.9	272.8
30,000 " " 40,000	7	7	4	3	247.5	254.6	140.1	107.6
40,000 " " 50,000	5	5	7	8	222.1	217.6	303.9	350.7
50,000 " " 80,000	10	7	6	5	645.4	468.6	400.3	307.4
80,000 and over	4	7	8	10	401.5	657.0	846.5	1,047.7
Total	305	303	305	294	2,314.6	2,436.6	2,523.7	2,659.9

(a) See paragraph 4, page 1.

TABLE 5. - INTERSTATE OR FEDERATED TRADE UNIONS, AUSTRALIA

End of December -	Unions operating in (a) -					Total
	2 States	3 States	4 States	5 States	6 States	
NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS (b)						
1970	11	7	17	27	85	147
1971	12	6	16	32	81	147
1972	10	5	17	29	79	140
1973	10	7	14	27	86	144
NUMBER OF MEMBERS ('000)						
1970	21.8	23.9	97.1	382.6	1,595.4	2,120.8
1971	24.3	21.0	104.2	425.9	1,660.5	2,235.9
1972	22.0	62.4	96.7	339.0	1,803.0	2,323.1
1973	50.6	64.6	101.5	327.7	1,937.1	2,481.4

(a) Certain unions have, in addition to branches in the States, branches in the Northern Territory and in the Australian Capital Territory. See paragraph 7, page 1. (b) See paragraph 4, page 1.

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NOTE. Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning Mr G. Laurie on 63 9111 extension 2055 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.