



A•S•U
Australian Services
Union
www.qld.asu.net.au

media release

for immediate release

8/3/07

Attention: Chief of Staff / News Editor

**BRISBANE CALL CENTRE BANS WORKERS FROM CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL
WOMENS DAY
THREATENS JOBS MAY BE OFF-SHORED**

Brisbane call centre Australian Communications Exchange (ACE) has been caught out banning an International Womens Day morning tea organised by workers for IWD on 8th March 2007.

The federally funded call centre, which provides telephone relay services for the Deaf Community has also told its predominantly female workforce that their refusal to downgrade pay and conditions in a proposed WorkChoices agreement may cost them their jobs, and workers were advised they could not celebrate morning tea as had originally been planned with the company.

The workers are currently employed under a State agreement negotiated with their union, the Australian Services Union. The workers' union representative was recently told to leave the premises after advising ACE that workers didn't want to give up their existing pay and conditions.

In a communication to staff on Monday 5th March, Chief Executive Officer for ACE Mr Wayne Gilbert said that "The EB Committee rejected this proposal, refusing to negotiate terms which will allow ACE to remain competitive in a market where ACE may in the future be undercut by overseas competitors...As negotiations with your union have broken down, ACE now looks to you directly to ensure that your employment with ACE continues...If a replacement agreement is not made...Brisbane Relay Officers will not receive a pay rise and the long term viability of the company will be in jeopardy".

ASU Secretary Julie Bignell said " This is a blatant and unnecessary attempt to manipulate loyal and hard-working people into thinking unless they give up their hard-won conditions as well as their union representation they will lose their jobs. It's despicable and the community should tell ACE to remember what they're there for. It's a waste of tax payers money for management to play these games and engage Top of the Town Lawyers to push these women around. They love serving the deaf community and they want to do their jobs without being ripped off or threatened with off-shoring."

The courageous workers have decided to go ahead with their morning tea despite management intimidation, choosing to celebrate IWD on the footpath with their colleagues.

DOORSTOP:

10.15am Thursday 8th March 2007

**295 Logan Road,
Stones Corner**

(in front of Australian Communications Exchange)

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The Australian Services Union (Clerical and Administrative Branch) represents workers in the clerical, administrative and call centre industries across both the public and private sectors throughout central and southern Queensland