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INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, AUSTRALIA, JULY 1991

MAIN FEATURES

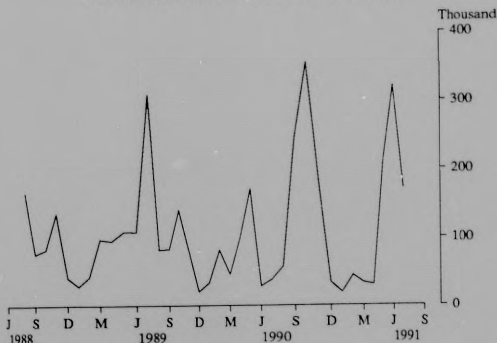
In July 1991—

- There were 131 disputes in progress involving 200,000 employees and the loss of 172,000 working days. The number of disputes in progress increased from 114 in June 1991; however the number of working days lost decreased from 320,300.
- The Construction industry recorded 32,500 working days lost, the highest figure for this industry since July 1989 (43,200).
- Western Australia recorded the sharpest decrease in working days lost - 14,100 in July compared to 35,900 in June 1991. A decrease of 60.7 per cent.

In the twelve months ending July 1991—

- There were 1,195 disputes in progress involving 881,400 employees. The number of working days lost was reported as 1,706,300, the highest number since the twelve months to September 1988 (1,711,500).
- Working days lost in the Metal products, machinery and equipment manufacturing industry increased to 1,046,300, the highest for the industry since the twelve months ending April 1982 (1,046,500). This industry accounted for 61.3 per cent of all time lost in the period.

CHART 1. WORKING DAYS LOST, AUSTRALIA



Source: Table 1.

INQUIRIES

• for further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Laura Smith on Canberra (06) 252 6561 or any ABS State office.

- for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.

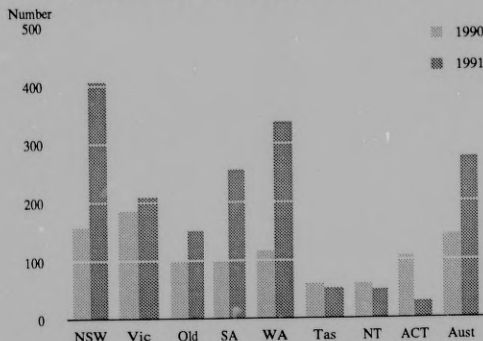
- South Australia recorded a substantial increase in working days lost (138,700) the highest number since June 1982 (143,200).

Of working days lost per thousand employees in the twelve months to July 1991:

- The Metal products, machinery and equipment manufacturing industry reported a further increase to 2,634, the highest rate since the series commenced in December 1981.

- High rates were reported in New South Wales (406 days per thousand employees), Western Australia (336) and South Australia (255). The Western Australian figure was the highest since the twelve months to October 1984 (406), while the South Australian figure was the highest since the twelve months to June 1982 (293).

CHART 2. WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES,
12 MONTHS ENDING JULY 1990 AND 1991



Source: Table 5.

NOTES

Statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector) and trade unions concerning individual disputes, and from reports of government authorities.

The statistics relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work in which ten working days or more were lost at the establishments where the stoppages occurred.

Statistics on working days lost per thousand employees are calculated using estimates of employment from the Survey of Employment and Earnings and the Labour Force Survey. It should be noted that recent employment estimates from the Survey of Employment and Earnings are subject to revision as a result of changes being made to the ABS's register of businesses. This may result in revisions to estimates of working days lost per thousand employees. For further details refer to the explanatory notes of the publication *Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia: (6248.0)*.

Explanatory Notes and a Glossary are published on pages 6 to 8 of this publication.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : AUSTRALIA(a)

Period	Number of disputes(b)		Employees involved ('000)		Working days lost ('000)
	Commenced in period	Total(c)	Newly involved(d)	Total(c)	
1990—					
May	117	137	116.9	149.3	171.2
June	94	104	22.2	23.9	29.1
July	94	109	34.3	36.9	38.6
August	117	125	48.4	49.4	57.7
September	110	121	218.9	232.3	244.9
October	130	151	95.7	276.7	355.1
November	106	137	18.9	233.4	183.0
December	52	60	21.5	29.2	34.1
1991—					
January	77	80	10.0	12.7	19.3
February	101	116	40.5	45.2	44.1
March	101	116	31.5	34.1	33.9
April	82	91	21.9	22.8	30.4
May	109	121	192.5	194.5	211.7
June r	96	114	118.3	286.2	320.3
July	106	131	62.2	200.0	172.0
Twelve months ended—					
July 1989	1,497	1,506	697.1	706.2	1,295.9
1990 r	1,179	1,198	576.2	601.0	911.4
1991	1,187	1,195	880.4	881.4	1,706.3
December 1988	1,502	1,508	893.9	894.4	1,641.4
1989	1,391	1,402	706.4	709.8	1,202.4
1990	1,189	1,193	725.9	729.9	1,376.5

(a) More detailed information by State and industry is available on request. (b) See paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes. (c) Refers to all disputes in progress during the period. (d) Comprises employees involved in disputes which commenced during the month and additional employees involved in disputes which continued from the previous month.

TABLE 2. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST(a) ('000)

Period	Manufacturing								All industries
	Mining		Metal products, machinery and equipment	Other	Construction	Transport and storage; Communication	Other industries (b)		
	Coal	Other							
1990—									
May	18.4	11.2	21.0	15.7	2.1	28.1	74.7	171.2	
June	12.4	2.4	2.9	1.6	0.4	2.2	7.2	29.1	
July	7.1	1.6	5.3	5.2	8.8	1.7	8.9	38.6	
August	12.1	2.9	5.2	12.7	4.8	2.6	17.4	57.7	
September	13.6	15.9	172.4	16.8	5.6	1.9	18.7	244.9	
October	17.6	35.8	225.2	28.8	8.7	9.7	29.2	355.1	
November	17.3	9.4	93.3	23.8	3.7	1.1	34.4	183.0	
December	7.4	0.3	4.4	2.8	0.3	0.5	18.4	34.1	
1991—									
January	4.8	0.9	2.1	4.9	4.0	1.4	1.2	19.3	
February	8.8	1.9	3.0	12.4	4.9	0.8	12.3	44.1	
March	8.3	1.1	3.8	3.7	8.8	1.4	6.8	33.9	
April	3.6	2.7	3.4	10.9	5.3	2.6	1.7	30.4	
May	7.1	2.9	179.7	13.6	2.7	3.1	2.5	211.7	
June r	5.7	6.5	248.8	3.0	17.9	7.0	31.4	320.3	
July	7.6	2.9	105.0	2.8	32.5	3.3	18.1	172.0	
Twelve months ended—									
July 1989	261.8	82.3	205.9	152.7	136.2	67.9	389.1	1,295.9	
1990 r	132.9	32.5	69.3	126.9	67.2	139.4	343.2	911.4	
1991	113.8	83.2	1,046.3	136.3	99.2	35.5	192.0	1,706.3	
December 1988	471.3	97.4	309.5	117.4	207.9	75.0	362.9	1,641.4	
1989	164.8	34.2	201.1	186.7	117.0	70.7	427.9	1,202.4	
1990	150.5	86.7	536.3	133.4	62.2	129.9	277.5	1,376.5	

(a) More detailed industry information is available on request. (b) Comprises Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; Electricity, gas and water; Wholesale and retail trade; Finance, property and business services; Public administration and defence; Community services; Recreation, personal and other services.

TABLE 3. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : STATES AND TERRITORIES, AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST^(a)
(^{'000})

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
1990—									
May	86.2	42.1	15.4	18.9	8.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	171.2
June	14.3	2.4	3.5	1.1	3.1	0.3	—	4.3	29.1
July	19.9	9.9	3.5	1.7	2.3	1.1	—	0.1	38.6
August	15.9	15.4	13.3	5.8	6.4	0.7	—	0.1	57.7
September	154.6	31.5	14.2	34.7	9.8	—	—	—	244.9
October	180.2	78.4	17.8	31.7	43.6	3.0	0.3	0.1	355.1
November	88.6	49.9	16.2	14.4	13.4	0.4	0.1	—	183.0
December	6.3	19.4	3.0	1.1	2.2	0.8	—	1.4	34.1
1991—									
January	7.2	4.9	2.3	0.3	4.6	—	—	—	19.3
February	21.6	12.3	3.1	2.8	4.3	—	—	—	44.1
March	13.8	7.9	3.9	5.4	2.5	0.3	0.1	0.1	33.9
April	7.6	9.4	3.4	3.8	3.2	0.5	1.5	0.9	30.4
May	146.8	13.5	5.4	4.8	39.4	1.6	0.1	0.1	211.7
June r	165.4	64.8	31.0	22.3	35.9	0.3	0.5	0.1	320.3
July	68.8	47.0	28.9	11.6	14.1	0.4	0.5	0.7	172.0
Twelve months ended—									
July 1989	684.6	294.9	109.8	27.9	154.0	11.4	7.8	5.5	1,295.9
1990 r	346.0	323.0	98.2	53.5	63.6	9.7	3.9	13.4	911.4
1991	876.8	354.4	142.4	138.7	179.4	8.0	3.2	3.5	1,706.3
December 1988	730.1	362.6	299.5	47.0	160.6	18.6	8.9	14.1	1,641.4
1989	589.6	348.4	100.5	35.0	102.1	10.2	6.9	9.6	1,202.4
1990	622.9	391.2	107.9	125.8	108.4	10.7	1.7	7.9	1,376.5

(a) State by industry information is available on request.

TABLE 4. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : BY INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES^(a)

Period	Manufacturing							Other industries (b)	All industries	
	Mining		Metal products, machinery and equipment	Other	Construction	Transport and storage; Communication				
	Coal	Other								
Twelve months ended—										
1987—										
December	8,920	1,072	479	305	743	217	70	223		
1988—										
December	15,548	1,777	750	183	725	177	85	269		
1989—										
December	5,505	642	473	283	374	160	97	190		
1989—										
July	8,723	1,527	491	236	456	157	90	209		
1990—										
May	5,423	746	353	244	357	340	109	198		
June	5,054	620	285	216	317	338	109	185		
July	4,432	612	163	196	211	317	77	143		
August	4,401	623	123	196	213	309	76	139		
September	4,590	866	524	191	207	308	72	165		
October	4,657	1,521	1,056	224	212	313	56	198		
November	4,747	1,654	1,275	215	216	309	58	215		
December	4,879	1,631	1,293	212	204	299	62	217		
1991—										
January r	4,774	1,627	1,304	215	208	262	63	216		
February r	4,379	1,613	1,310	220	208	245	59	210		
March	4,243	1,626	1,326	218	236	241	55	209		
April	4,271	1,639	1,342	226	194	125	52	198		
May	3,928	1,483	1,746	224	197	67	36	205		
June r	3,731	1,562	2,371	227	257	78	41	252		
July	3,771	1,589	2,634	224	339	82	44	274		

(a) See paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Comprises Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; Electricity, gas and water; Wholesale and retail trade; Finance, property and business services; Public administration and defence; Community services; Recreation, personal and other services.

TABLE 5. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : STATES AND TERRITORIES, AUSTRALIA,
WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES(a)

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Twelve months ended—									
1987—									
December	366	172	87	91	213	177	110	143	223
1988—									
December	341	214	336	93	299	118	158	112	269
1989—									
December	269	199	102	67	187	64	111	77	190
1989—									
July	318	170	116	55	288	73	131	44	209
1990—									
May	248	257	101	107	153	59	74	79	198
June	229	239	100	103	139	60	72	113	185
July	157	185	99	101	116	60	60	107	143
August	147	183	102	102	116	61	56	94	139
September	204	189	106	162	109	61	30	68	165
October	255	205	109	218	184	64	29	52	198
November	281	220	115	234	198	63	27	51	215
December	283	226	111	236	200	67	26	62	217
1991—									
January	285	217	110	234	203	67	24	61	216
February	284	202	106	233	201	66	17	60	210
March	282	200	107	235	201	64	17	61	209
April	284	165	105	225	193	47	33	58	198
May	312	149	95	199	252	56	35	57	205
June	383	186	124	237	313	56	42	24	252
July	406	209	151	255	336	51	49	28	274

(a) See paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 6. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES ENDING IN THE 12 MONTHS TO JULY 1991 : AUSTRALIA,
REPORTED CAUSE, DURATION AND METHOD OF SETTLEMENT(a)

	Number of disputes	Employees involved (directly and indirectly) (⁰⁰⁰)	Working days lost (⁰⁰⁰)
CAUSE OF DISPUTE			
Wages	102	50.9	106.7
Hours of work	18	2.8	2.1
Leave, pensions, compensation	47	10.1	30.9
Managerial policy	608	489.9	949.1
Physical working conditions	180	26.6	54.8
Trade unionism	146	18.9	35.3
Other(b)	73	50.8	52.6
Total	1,174	649.9	1,231.4
DURATION OF DISPUTE			
Up to and including 1 day	822	384.3	347.2
Over 1 and up to and including 2 days	148	215.3	541.1
Over 2 and less than 5 days	99	27.5	99.5
5 and less than 10 days	72	13.8	89.1
10 and less than 20 days	22	6.5	83.2
20 days and over	11	2.6	71.2
Total	1,174	649.9	1,231.4
METHOD OF SETTLEMENT			
Negotiation	192	67.1	165.5
State legislation	122	90.0	167.4
Federal and joint Federal-State legislation	125	121.6	390.2
Resumption without negotiation	715	368.6	590.6
Other methods	20	2.7	7.7
Total	1,174	649.9	1,231.4

(a) More detailed information by State and industry is available on request. (b) Includes disputes not elsewhere categorised.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

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 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 (as defined in paragraph 2 of 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 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.

Change in methodology

4. The basis for the calculation of working days lost per thousand employees was changed in January 1987 to include estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings. They are combined with estimates of the number of employees in agriculture and in private households, obtained from the Labour Force Survey. Estimates have been recalculated on this basis for each month back to June 1984 and are available on request. In issues of this publication prior to January 1987, the estimates of numbers of employees were based entirely on Labour Force Survey data. The effect of the change is minimal at the 'all industries' level but is quite significant, in some cases, for individual industry groups.

5. The basis for the calculation of the number of disputes was changed in December 1987 (see paragraph 2 of the Glossary). Before that date, where the causes of several disputes were the same (e.g. National Wage Case disputes) the disputes were counted as one dispute in each State or Territory in which they occurred, irrespective of whether they were directed or organised by one person or organisation, or whether the dispute occurred in more than one industry. The reason for the change was to align the method of counting the number of disputes with the International Labour Organisation guidelines. In accordance with this change in definition, estimates of the number of disputes shown in this bulletin for past periods have been revised. In issues of this publication prior to September 1988, the number of disputes were counted on the old basis. Unpublished estimates of the number of disputes have been revised on the new basis from January 1985 and are avail-

able on request. The number of employees involved and working days lost remain unchanged.

Reliability of estimates

6. 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.

Other ABS publications

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

Labour Statistics, Australia (6101.0) — issued annually

The Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary (6202.0) — issued monthly

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0) — issued monthly

Trade Union Statistics, Australia (6323.0) — issued annually

Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1990 (6325.0)

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

Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Australia (6312.0) — issued monthly

Unpublished statistics

8. A range of unpublished data is also available on request including dispute details at more detailed industry levels, cross-classified by States/Territories, 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 associated charges should be directed to Laura Smith on (06) 252 6561.

9. 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 *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

- r estimates revised since last issue
- nil or rounded to zero

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

GLOSSARY

Cause of dispute

The statistics of causes of industrial disputes relate to the reported main cause of the 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 other claims are deemed to be the most important are included under the relevant cause. Disputes over award restructuring are included under managerial policy.

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

Leave, pensions, compensation. Claims involving general principles relating to holiday 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; award restructuring; work practices; principles of promotion or deployment of staff including roster complaints and retrenchments; disciplinary matters including alleged victimization 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.

Other. Disputes concerning protests directed against persons or situations other than those relating to the employer/employee relationship e.g. political matters; fining and gaoing 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.

Disputes

2. 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.

3. A dispute affecting several establishments is counted as a single dispute if it is organised or directed by one person or organisation in each State or Territory in which it occurs; otherwise it is counted as a separate dispute at each establishment (in each State or Territory) and in each industry in which it occurred. Prior to December 1987 disputes were counted differently (refer to paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes for other details).

4. When there is a return to work between stoppages over the same issue, and the return to work is for less than two complete calendar months, the stoppages are counted as a single dispute. When the return to work is for two or more calendar 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.

5. Information is recorded concerning all industrial disputes where ten or more working days are lost (see paragraph 1 of the Explanatory Notes). 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.

Duration of dispute

6. 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 total number of working days lost in the dispute by the number of employees involved (both directly and indirectly).

Employees

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

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

9. *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.

10. *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

11. 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

12. *Working days lost* refer 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.

Working days lost per thousand employees

13. *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 Survey of Employment and Earnings and the ABS Labour Force Survey. Refer to paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the way in which these measures are calculated, and the change in the method of calculation from 1987.



LABOUR STATISTICS AUSTRALIA, 1989

(Catalogue No. 6101.0)

This publication provides a wealth of information, including time series statistics, on the Australian labour market in tabular and graphical forms. Selected features highlight some of the more significant elements and trends.

Aspects of the Australian labour market covered in the publication include:

- socio-demographic characteristics of the labour force
- employment, unemployment and underemployment
- persons not in the labour force
- award rates, labour costs and employment benefits
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