



Phil Teece  
Industrial Information Officer

**T**he re-election of the Keating Labor Government has major implications for the future direction of industrial relations in Australia. The course set by the Industrial Relations Commission in its October 1991 National Wage Case decision, when it adopted enterprise bargaining as a basis for wage fixing, is now certain to prevail for the foreseeable future.

Wholesale movement away from the traditional system of conciliation and arbitration envisaged by the Opposition's Jobspack policy now seems feasible only in Victoria. Even there, indications are for a softening of policy to halt the flight of state employees to the Federal system. Without a change to its policy of removing access to arbitration, the Victorian Government will face the embarrassment of perhaps as few as ten per cent of employees previously covered by state awards remaining within its control. The remainder can be expected to use the Keating Government's new legislation to gain federal award coverage. Although the Victorian High Court challenge to that legislation is still to be determined, few commentators believe it will be upheld.

Given the election result, the charter recently adopted by Labor

will dominate the industrial relations agenda over the next few years. Labor's major undertakings are:

- to encourage further decentralisation through enterprise agreements;
- not to force employees out of award coverage;
- to maintain the role of trade unions; and
- to retain conciliation and arbitration as a basic right.

### Competencies project

With election uncertainty over, Arts Training Australia's Library Competencies Project is now proceeding. At the time of writing, the joint Task Force was about to hold its second meeting. ALIA's representative on the Task Force is Anne Hazell, Immediate Past Chair of the Board of Education. Project Coordinator Annabelle Langdale of Arts Training's Sydney Office advises that informal consultations with interest groups across the industry have now commenced.

### Workforce subprogram

As I mentioned in last month's column, commencement of the Competencies Project has allowed General Council to review its overall approach to workforce issues.

*I have been asked to set up a network with representatives of all State branches through which information on industrial developments can be gathered*

Council at its March meeting noted the extent of change now spreading through Australian industry and felt there was a need for more co-ordination and liaison on employment matters. A Workforce Committee has been created to oversee a formal Workforce Sub Program which will develop strategy recommendations for General Council in this area.

### Information network on industrial developments

In addition, I have been asked to set up a network with representatives of all State branches through which information on industrial developments can be gathered. I would hope this can enable ALIA to become aware of issues as they are happening rather than to find out about decisions when they are finalised. It hardly needs saying that there is far more chance of influencing outcomes during the process. Efforts to have decisions reviewed after the event rarely achieve much success. Membership of the network has not yet been finalised but I hope to confirm representation shortly. In the meantime, I will be glad to hear from any members who wish to discuss any current industrial issue. ■

## WHO CARES ABOUT SERVICE?



Your Link with the World of Serials

Ph: (07) 371 7500 STD free (008) 777 134  
or free from NZ 0800 44 6133  
and free from PNG 05 08 61 055  
Fax: (07) 371 5206

## How do you keep the library service up to standard when there's too much work and not enough staff?

One solution is to use temporary staff who can handle the extra workload caused by the end-of-financial-year rush, special projects, backlogs.

You can put your core people to work on the things they do best and fill in the shortfall with a temp who has exactly the skills you require.

Your library benefits from achieving its goals — on time and with the best use of your resources.

We're ready to help you through this busy time, so call us now.

Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane

Tel. (02) 699 1855

Fax. (02) 698 4534

Free Call 008 244 337

*Library Locums*