

Press Release

To: All Media Outlets
From: Simon Cocker
Date: 9 October 2007
Re: **United Petroleum Acts Illegally but its OK says Ombudsman**

In another shocking expose of the Workchoices legislation the Workplace Ombudsman has advised Unions Tasmania that United Petroleum imposed an invalid agreement on staff when using a greenfields agreement to strip them of overtime, penalty rates, public holidays, rest breaks and other conditions of employment last year. The Workplace Ombudsman has advised that the company has not breached the Workplace Relations Act and staff are no longer entitled to those award conditions said Unions Tasmania Secretary Simon Cocker commenting on advice from the Ombudsman on an investigation of the issues received.

Mr Cocker also said

“It is very disappointing to wait 14 months to find that the company has acted illegally but there is no protection for the employees nor any consequence for the company.”

“ This company exerted duress on employees by forcing them to accept the illegal document or no job, signed a declaration saying that they were compliant with the Act, forced workers to work unpaid hours and stripped workers of their take home pay. How can there be no consequences for this bad behaviour? “

“I call on Mr Hockey to explain why these employees do not have the protection of his so called fairness test and why Workchoices has left these workers unprotected.”

“Unions Tasmania is seeking further clarification from the investigating officer Mr Jordan and further legal advice on the technical issues raised and will be making a further statement later in the week.”

For further comment or query Simon Cocker on 0419 402377