

Over the last couple of weeks union organisers have heard hundreds of horror stories from research workers. We thought we would share a small selection:

☎ In one CATI room the carpet is worn through and is often uncleaned. Because of this it has been infested with fleas. One worker was bitten in the leg and ended up in hospital.

☎ One company's policy is that if you don't make target you aren't allowed any shifts. You don't even have a right to further training or a second chance.

☎ One company which runs its payroll from Australia regularly stuffs up, meaning workers get paid late. One worker wasn't even being paid for weeks, until the union told the company to get its act together.

☎ A worker turned up to his company one wet and cold evening when he was rostered onto work, only to be told there was no workstations available. The supervisor didn't even say sorry!

☎ At a couple of companies workers have to scramble at the start of the shift for chairs and phones that are not broken. The losers in this dash go home with sore backs and ringing ears.

☎ One call centre is so hot in summer that people faint!

**Calling
for
Change**



For more information and assistance with work issues contact us.

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Calling for Change



**Campaign
Update #3
05/09/08**

ONE BIG UNION AGREEMENT

Over the last month hundreds of union members took part in meetings to decide on what they want in the new union collective agreement. At ten different research companies members took part in secret ballots and overwhelmingly voted for one big union agreement to cover ten different companies.

Unite has decided that the best way to improve wages and conditions is to win one big agreement that will cover all of the six hundred union members working in TNS, SurveyTalk, Synovate, UMR, Phoenix, MarketPulse, OCIS, Colmar Brunton, DigiPoll and Reid Research.



In the next two weeks the union will be meeting with all the bosses to discuss the union claims.

Union Members Want:

- *At least \$15 an hour!
 - * 5 minutes paid break for every hour worked
 - * 24 hours shift security
 - *Right to permanency after two years
 - *Less noisy, cleaner and less stressful CATI rooms
- More Claims On Next Page...*

better pay, better conditions, healthier workplaces

MORE PAY, MORE SAY

Union members want justice at work. At mass meetings at ten different companies, members voted on what they want improved.

Health and Safety

- *Partition walls between banks of computers.
- *Minimum desk space.
- *Guidelines on temperature.
- *Hand wipes always available.
- *Regular meetings to discuss health and safety and have input into wording of surveys.
- *Paid time to do exercises.

Pay

- *Minimum \$15 an hour. \$17, \$17.50, \$18 and \$20 claims at some companies.
- *No piece rate contracts.
- *Consultation from employees on various wage rates.
- *Option of being paid weekly and being paid on a Thursday.
- *Honesty from management on when work is available.

Shifts

- *5 minutes paid break for every hour worked
- *3 hour minimum shift
- *Shift allocation based on seniority
- *Flexibility in shift rostering if people miss shifts.
- *Provision for reasonable "micro-breaks" whereby an employee may get a drink for themselves or visit the bathroom but not leave the centre.

Job security

- *24 hours shift security and 1/4 pay if less than a weeks notice of cancellation.
- *Right to guaranteed hours, permanent employment with redundancy pay for those working over two years

In just one year global media corporations earn more money than some small nations. In 2007 TNS made more in profit than the government of Tonga earns in two years!

-WPP, the parent company that owns **Colmar Brunton** made NZ\$1.367 billion profit in 2007.

-**TNS** internationally made NZ\$155.322 million profit in 2007.

-In 2007 Aegis Group which owns **Synovate** made \$250.642m.

ORGANISE LOCALLY, ACT GLOBALLY

Over the last few weeks hundreds of Australian market and social research workers have been signing petitions expressing solidarity and support for research workers in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Through the *Calling for Change* campaign and other initiatives, call centre workers across the world are now beginning to organise globally and work together to create a world where workers get fair wages, decent conditions and a say over what happens at work.

Unite is working closely with the Australian union for research workers, the National Union of Workers (NUW), which has around 3000 market and social research workers.

At the same time that Unite are campaigning for higher pay in Aotearoa New Zealand for research workers, the NUW are campaigning at many of the same research companies for a 6% pay rise and bonuses for working weekends and after 9pm.

Workers across the world face the same problems NZ workers do. Global organising gives us the power we need to improve our lives at work!



“Call centre work will be one of the jobs of the next hundred years. But if we do not do anything concrete, we will be the new slaves of the next hundred years. We are going to see a whole generation of people suffering from illness and depression.”

-Laila Nassimi, worker in Morocco's first unionised call centre