For Release Immediately

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**What will ALP’s key Industrial Relations Policies mean for business?**

*Summary of Key ALP IR policies in 10 bullet points*

***Gold Coast— 14/05/19*** — With the federal election now just days away QLD Workplace Law expert Denise O’Reilly, Principal at O’Reilly Workplace Law, shares her summary of the ALP’s key IR policies that she thinks are of interest, and of concern, for business.

The ALP intends to achieve its policy agenda, including:

* By making various changes to and limiting the use of various forms of flexible labour. For example, by:
  + Creating a statutory definition of who is and is not a casual employee. We expect this to narrow the categories of workers who can be genuinely treated as casual
  + Providing a right to request to convert from casual employment to permanent employment after 12 months, and giving employees the right to litigate any refusal by their employer to convert them
  + By cracking down on, and tightening up the definition of what amounts to, ‘sham contracting’
  + The establishment of a federal labour hire licensing scheme that will mean that labour hire employees must be given the same pay and conditions as the host employer’s direct employees next to whom they work
  + Passing laws to protect gig economy workers (what this might look like is unclear at this stage)
* By establishing a higher, ‘living wage’ instead of the ‘minimum wage’ for employees not covered by awards (the question remains whether such a living wage will filter through (even if indirectly) into award minimum wages
* By abolishing the Australian Building and Construction Commission (the building industry watchdog)
* By providing for 10 days’ paid domestic violence leave
* By increasing the severity of consequences for wage underpayments – what the union movement and ALP call ‘wage theft’. This will include clarifying that directors and other individuals involved in underpaid entitlements may be personally liable not only for fines, but for the value of any underpaid entitlements
* Reversing cuts to penalty rates in particular industry awards (including hospitality and retail)
* By providing for industry based bargaining in which multiple employers, such as across one industry or industry sector, may be forced to bargain with employees and unions for an enterprise agreement to apply to them all
* By changing enterprise bargaining laws, including to:
  + require enterprise agreements to be voted up by employees who reflect all who will be covered by them
  + make it more difficult to terminate expired agreements
  + make WorkChoices-era ‘zombie’ agreements automatically end
  + give the Fair Work Commission greater powers to arbitrate enterprise bargaining disputes
  + improving rights for employees and unions to take protected industrial action to support bargaining claims
* By taking a range of steps they consider will help achieve gender pay parity, including by banning pay secrecy clauses, making it easier to vary awards in female dominated industries (including increasing childcare wages by 20%), requiring large employers to disclose gender pay gaps, amongst other things
* By tightening up laws affecting visa workers, including minimum pay of $65,000 for workers in areas of skills shortages, giving the FWO powers to inspect breaches of visa working conditions, amongst other things

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