

MEDIA RELEASE

Ergon Energy and The Services Union Join Together For White Ribbon Day.

The Services Union and Ergon Energy are holding three White Ribbon Day events in Townsville on Friday, 25 November 2016.

White Ribbon Day events are held on the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women each year.

The Services Union has been a long supporter of White Ribbon Day and has been a lead advocate for Domestic and Family Violence Leave (DFVL) to be included in the National Employment Standards (NES).

The greater union movement also understands that Domestic and Family Violence not only puts working people at risk, it can limit a worker's ability to do their job effectively, which may result in performance management issues, terminations and forced resignations.

That is why Australian Unions have been championing this issue across the country, lobbying governments and employers to include it in awards, enterprise agreements and workplace policies.

Ergon Energy is a part of Energy Queensland (EQL) which has adopted comprehensive DFVL provisions for their workforce. Secretary of The Services Union Neil Henderson said EQL is to be applauded for taking the lead and being one of the first organisations to provide DFVL for their employees.

"Congratulations to EQL management for delivering comprehensive 'Seven Star' DFVL provisions which include a minimum 10 days paid leave where required," Mr Henderson said.

"Domestic Violence can impact on the employee/employer relationship through increased absenteeism due to injury, sickness, stress, court attendance, child safety and many other factors."

"With all this in mind, EQL's policy means its employees can now access the leave and support they might need to deal with the sort of complexities which arise in these circumstances such as accommodation, schooling and obtaining legal advice, whilst feeling supported by their employer in doing so."

"By EQL management taking a stand on this issue, they are playing a crucial role in creating real change in Queensland saying Not Now, Not Ever to Domestic and Family Violence," Mr Henderson said.

"This organisation is taking the lead and setting a positive example for all employers in tackling this serious social issue – it is about more than just awareness campaigns and provides real support for workers impacted by Domestic or Family Violence."

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W theservicesunion.com.au

P 07 3844 5300

F 07 3846 5046

AUSTRALIAN MUNICIPAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE, CLERICAL
AND SERVICES UNION QUEENSLAND
(SERVICES
AND NORTHERN ADMINISTRATIVE)
BRANCH
ABN 86 351 665 653

TRADING AS
THE SERVICES UNION

BRANCH SECRETARY:

Neil Henderson

ASSISTANT BRANCH SECRETARY:

Jennifer Thomas

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Belinda Hogan-Collis Media/Communications Officer 0401 710 039.

Friday's events mark the start of a global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, which The Services Union and the greater union movement are participating in.

"We are seeking to establish the principle that employers have a role to play and can help to achieve structural change on this issue," Mr Henderson said.

"The Queensland Government has already shown its commitment to addressing Domestic and Family Violence and very soon we could be the first State or Territory in the country with legislated DFVL arrangements, if the new Industrial Relations Bill is passed."

"Unfortunately, the Federal Government, particularly Minister For Women and Employment Michaelia Cash has shown no real leadership on this vital issue, continuing to ignore calls to include DFVL in the NES."

EVENT DETAILS - ALL MEDIA WELCOME

Secretary of the Services Union Neil Henderson will be joined by A/General Manager Human Resources for Ergon, Brad Montgomery and Pauline Woodbridge, Coordinator from the North Qld Domestic Violence Prevention Centre.

EVENT ONE:

6:45am BBQ followed by a 7:15 talk - Ergon (Garbutt) 34 - 46 Dalrymple Road (Main) Garbutt

EVENT TWO:

7:45am second BBQ event at Garbutt, talk at approximately 8am.

EVENT THREE:

10am Morning Tea event at Ergon - 420 Flinders Street, Townsville.