

# People Matters



Issue 1, November 2004

## Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of our monthly Newsletter. We are often asked questions about People Matters, hence the name.

In 1 page each month this Newsletter will inform you of topical issues and answer frequently asked questions related to effectively managing your people. Topics and answers will relate directly to issues commonly faced by small and medium sized businesses.

We all have less and less time to do more and more things. You have been chosen to receive this copy because you are a current or past client and the information will be relevant to you.

People Matters will be emailed at the start of each month. To confirm that you wish to continue to receive People Matters please "reply" directly to this email, send an email to [enquiries@dynamicpeople.com.au](mailto:enquiries@dynamicpeople.com.au), or phone us on 03 9533 0923. You may 'unsubscribe' at any time.

If you **do not** confirm that you wish to be placed on our mailing list for People Matters, we will respect your privacy and you will not receive further editions.

Carolyn and Laura

## You can't change the past but You can make the Future

Do you have a question you would like answered? Let us know - your suggestions for topics are welcome.

If someone else in your business may be interested in People Matters please forward a copy to them.

## Common Rule Awards

The big news in Victoria at the moment (although there is very little publicity about it) is the Uniform Systems Act which was legislated in January this year and will come into effect on 1 January 2005.

Employers who do not have current Federal Award coverage, an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA) or a Certified Agreement will be impacted by this. For those of you who remember, it is essentially a reversion to the pre-Kennet times when everyone came under an Award. However in Victoria there will no longer be any State based Awards, and everyone will come under Federal Awards.

Employees may therefore be bound to the terms and conditions of an existing Federal Award as a "Common Rule Award". This means that even employers who are not listed as respondents to that award will be bound to those conditions.

There are more than 180 applications currently before the Australian Industrial Relations Commission and 15 awards have now been confirmed to come into operation from 1 January.

Many businesses will see a direct impact in their wages bill, for example many Awards specify fixed hours of work and/or that a 17.5% holiday loading must be paid. For many smaller employers it now looks like an AWA will be a viable alternative to Federal Award coverage.

The Australian Industrial Relations Commission has information available at their website – see <http://www.e-airc.gov.au/crvic/>.

There is still time to manage the change process. Give us, or your specialist employment lawyer, a call to discuss whether you will be impacted.

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