

Evidence does not support return to big collectives

Business NZ says the evidence is against a return to big collectives.

Labour's employment policy includes changing the Employment Relations Act to get more multi-employer collective agreements (MECAs). These are large collectives capable of covering entire sectors. During the 1970s National Awards and other large collectives were responsible for sector-wide strikes, allowing entire industries to be shut down.

Business NZ Chief Executive Phil O'Reilly says Statistics NZ's strike data makes this clear.

"During the time of the big collectives – from 1970 until enterprise bargaining started in 1987 - lost time from strikes averaged over 600,000 hours per year.

"Since full enterprise bargaining was introduced in 1990, lost time has averaged less than 200,000 hours a year.

"Reducing work stoppages and lost time are critical to improving the economy, especially now. This is not a time to be returning to policies that caused so much economic destruction in the past."

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Total Stoppages and Person Days Lost (1970 - 2006)

