

ALLA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Regulation of Work in a 'COVID-normal' World

11-12 November 2022, Crowne Plaza, Coogee Beach

The Australian Labour Law Association's 2022 National Conference will celebrate the 20th anniversary of ALLA's first conference, held in Melbourne in 2002. This year's Conference will be held towards the end of the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, amidst the backdrop of a cautious return to some semblance of normality as businesses and workers move from the 'lockdown' phase to attempting to 'live with COVID'. The adjustment to 'COVID-normal' has also coincided with a resurgence in the notion of 'freedom of contract' in the employment sphere and a retreat by the courts from the task of moderating unfairness resulting from a disparity in bargaining power.

The implications of the High Court's decisions in *CFMMEU v Personnel Contracting Pty Ltd* and *ZG Operations Australia Pty Ltd v Jamsek* and the focus on the formal terms of the contract at the time of formation will be central to discussions about the 'COVID-normal' world of work.



ALLA is delighted to announce that **Professor Douglas Brodie** from the University of Strathclyde will be joining the conference in person to present a keynote address which examines in a comparative context the approach of courts in the United Kingdom in light of these significant decisions.

The wider implications of these and other developments for the regulation of work will be explored at the conference, including hybrid working, the (non-)return to offices and other in-person workplace settings, ongoing working-from-home arrangements for many workers, and the position of large proportions of the workforce for whom working on-site has remained a constant throughout the pandemic.

Many other aspects of labour law and employment relations will be discussed including those arising from the following sub-themes:

- The High Court of Australia's 'rewriting of the rules' relating to determining the nature of work contracts (employee/independent contractor distinction, definition of 'casual')
- The regulation of casual employment (including the High Court's approach, 2021 Fair Work Act amendments, Victorian Government's sick pay guarantee scheme)
- Post-federal election landscape for labour law/workplace relations
- Workplace equality in a COVID-normal environment
- AI's impact on work: recruitment, surveillance, gig work
- Wage stagnation, the contraction of enterprise bargaining, and the post-pandemic position of unions and industrial action
- Work health and safety in the COVID-normal work context and more broadly
- Underpayments, enforcement and wage theft legislation

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The ALLA 2022 conference will be held in person at the **Crowne Plaza at Coogee Beach in Sydney**.

Over two days, participants will hear from leading labour law academics, practitioners and emerging scholars about current issues in Australia and beyond. A conference dinner on Friday night will provide the opportunity to network and re-establish relationships with colleagues, and to celebrate ALLA's 20th birthday. Special accommodation rates at Crowne Plaza Coogee Beach will be available for conference participants who register directly with ALLA.



A Call for Papers will be issued in April 2022. Early bird registration will open mid year.

We hope to see you in Sydney in November!

2022 Conference Organising Committee: Dominique Allen, Larissa Andelman, David Chin SC, Anthony Forsyth, Emma Goodwin, Marilyn Pittard, Joellen Riley Munton, Graham Smith and Janine Smith.
