



Biography: Michael Crosby AM

Michael Crosby AM has been a union official for the past 50 years, holding leadership positions across a range of unions and organisations for 46 of those years.

He began in 1976 as an organiser with Actors' Equity, rising to become National Secretary from 1981 to 1991, when he led the merger that formed the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance. During his time leading Equity, he ran campaigns on a wide range of issues and left the union as a powerful force within the entertainment industry.

In 1991, he left for London to become General Secretary of the International Federation of Actors, where he helped revive or establish actors' unions across Eastern Europe following the end of Communist rule.

In 1995, he became Director of the Trade Union Training Authority. After its abolition, he was instrumental in ensuring its survival as an arm of the ACTU. During his time there, he and his colleagues led the reform program of the trade union movement as it grappled with a challenging industrial relations environment.

Based on that experience, he wrote *Power at Work: Rebuilding the Australian Union Movement*, which was subsequently translated into Dutch and German. The book has become a critical reference on union reform in both Australia and internationally.

In 2006, he became Regional Organising Director for SEIU, one of North America's largest unions and a leader in innovative organising techniques.

In that role, he designed and led the Clean Start campaign for the LHMU, now the United Workers Union, which aimed to lift office cleaners out of poverty.

In 2008, he moved to the Netherlands to establish the European Organising Centre, which supported European unions in their reform efforts.

By 2010, he had returned to Australia, where he designed and launched the Big Steps campaign for the LHMU, which aimed to secure professional wages for early childhood educators. He then became the union's National President.

From 2014, he briefly worked for the ACTU, focusing on its Capital Strategies program, before returning to SEIU to contribute to its Fight for \$15 campaign. This then led to him working closely with FNV, the largest Dutch union, as an adviser to its Board during its own reform process.



That consultancy work continued with a range of unions until he was asked to become Executive Officer of the CFMEU in NSW and the ACT. He has held that position for the past 11 months. During that time, he has overseen a substantial turnover of organising staff and brought in new talent untainted by the corrupt behaviour of the previous leadership.

His work at the CFMEU has focused on changing the union's culture. He has been determined to return the union to its roots of principled action in defence of construction workers. He has led a drive to enforce compliance with the union's enterprise bargaining agreement and to position the union for expansion into new areas of the industry. Deals behind closed doors are off the table, and organisers and delegates are held to the highest standards of conduct.