

QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK: INCREASING AVAILABILITY AND TAKE UP IN NEW ZEALAND

DISCUSSION PAPER
November 2006

Department of Labour
TE TARI MAHI





YOUR RESPONSE INVITED

The Department of Labour would like your views on quality flexible work.

Quality flexible work is about people having the opportunity to make changes to the hours or times they work and where they work. It is also about how careers are organised, how transitions in and out of work are managed and how flexible work is managed in the workplace so that employees and businesses benefit.

We want to hear about the issues that matter to you and the best approaches that would work for you, your workplace or your business. You can either answer the questions on the detachable response form at pages 18 to 21 or submit a statement about your views.

Responses are due by **5pm, Friday 15 December 2006** and can be made online at www.dol.govt.nz, or sent by post, email or fax to:

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Additional copies of the discussion paper are available online at www.dol.govt.nz or contact 04 915 4000.

If you have any questions about the consultation please contact Cath Edmondson.



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION:	3
What is this paper about?	
Why do we want to hear from you?	
ABOUT QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK:	4
What is it?	
What are the key issues?	
What are the key benefits?	
QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK – THE RANGE OF APPROACHES	7
SUPPORTING INFORMATION	9
Issues in detail	9
Range of approaches in detail	12
QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK RESOURCES	17



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THIS PAPER ABOUT?

The Department of Labour wants your views on what will best help employees achieve quality flexible work and meet the needs of businesses. Having quality flexible working arrangements is becoming an important part of our workplaces. A pressing issue for many New Zealanders is trying to balance work with other things in their lives such as caring for children or older parents, or playing sport or working in the community. We are also working longer hours and taking longer getting to and from work.

New Zealand's healthy economy means that there are more people in the workforce and employers are finding it more difficult to find the skilled workers they need. Many employers are offering flexible working arrangements such as flexible start and finish times to attract and retain employees and support them to continue to do other things in their lives that are important. However many employees say these arrangements are not available to them.

A number of countries have legislated for employee rights to request flexible working arrangements. Other countries have relied on education and promotion to increase availability and take up of flexible work arrangements. We need to find out the best approaches that will work for New Zealand.

The Department of Labour wants to know what you think are the issues for you and your workplace. We want to find out how quality flexible work arrangements can be supported in New Zealand's workplaces and work for everyone. On the detachable response form on pages 18 to 21 you will find some questions about quality flexible work that we would like you to answer. This paper provides information that may help you think about the issues.

WHY DO WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU?

Directions from the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee of Parliament

In 2005 this Committee heard from a wide range of people on the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Hours) Amendment Bill¹.

If passed into law, the Bill would allow employees who care for children under five years of age or children with a disability under 18 years of age, the right to request flexible working arrangements (such as changes to their hours of work) in their workplace. It would also require employers to consider a request and would limit grounds on which the request may be refused.

After hearing evidence, the Committee agreed that there was a need for flexible working hours, but did not agree on the best mechanism for delivering flexible working hours. The Committee noted that some employers have already introduced flexible working practices, but many employees say that they are not sufficiently available to them.

The Committee set the Bill aside for one year and asked the Department of Labour to find out more about what was happening in New Zealand workplaces and to consult widely on the mechanisms to deliver flexible working hours.

Support for quality flexible work across government, business and unions

The Department of Labour has been working together with the business sector, unions and workplace leaders to come up with practical ways to introduce and manage flexible work in workplaces. Your views on what works, what doesn't, the reasons why and what would help will be important to guide our future decisions.

1. A member's Bill in the name of Sue Kedgley

ABOUT QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK

WHAT IS IT?

Quality flexible work can benefit employees and employers, the economy and communities. It is about people having the opportunity to make changes to the hours they work (over a day, a week or over the year), the times they work or where they work. It is also about how careers are organised, how transitions in and out of work are managed, and how flexible work is managed in the workplace so that employees and businesses benefit.

Examples of quality flexible work include:

- Varying starting and finishing times
- Annualised hours or term time working
- Part-time working
- Working from home or tele-working
- Job sharing
- Selecting or influencing own rosters or shifts
- Flexible break provisions
- Flexible leave/time off provisions (paid and unpaid)

WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES?

There is a skills shortage in New Zealand and it is likely to continue

- Quality flexible work is one way of retaining skilled workers and encouraging people to enter and stay in the labour market.

There is a mismatch between availability and take up of flexible work

- As the Transport and Industrial Relations Committee noted in its interim report, some employers have already introduced flexible working practices, but many employees say that these practices are not sufficiently available to them.

Different approaches are needed for different types of work, types of workers and types of organisations

- There is no one size fits all solution. For example, small business needs differ from larger businesses. Solutions for shift workers will be different from, and possibly more limited than, solutions for "9 to 5" staff. Not all employees need the same type of flexibility and their need for flexibility can change over time.

WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW?²

We no longer work a standard 40 hour working week

- 19% of New Zealanders work more than 50 hours per week
- 40% have variable hours of work
- 18% do shift work
- About a quarter work some hours at night

Some people have significant work-life balance conflict

- While many New Zealanders say they have good work-life balance, there is a significant group who have work-life conflict – particularly among those who care for children.

2. Main sources: • Department of Labour 2006 *Work-life Balance in New Zealand: a snapshot of employee and employer attitudes and experiences*
• EEO Trust 2006 *Work-life Survey Report* (draft)

Attitudes of others in the workplace have an impact

- Key factors that make it harder for many employees are the expectations and attitudes of colleagues and workmates.

Flexible start and finish times help

- Employees report that the most helpful initiative is having flexible start and finish times. Employees also indicated preferences for additional leave, both paid and unpaid, more say about how they work, including the ability to change rosters and shifts, and the hours they work.

A majority of employers say they already offer initiatives to help

- A majority of employers surveyed offer some work-life balance initiatives, however these may not be taken up by employees nor be available to all employees.

Most employers do not see any barriers to offering flexibility

- Most employers did not see barriers to offering flexible working arrangements in workplaces. But among those who did, the most common barriers were that the “type of work needed everyone at work at the same time” and that flexible work arrangements may be hard to manage or organise.

The types of flexibility offered in workplaces will vary according to business size

- The types of flexibility offered by employers will differ according to the size of the business. Small employers (with up to 10 staff) appear to be very flexible and offer a range of working practices

to staff. However as organisations grow in size, it appears to become more difficult to provide flexible working arrangements.

To find out more about these issues see pages 9 to 11.

WHAT ARE THE KEY BENEFITS?

The government’s long term goal is to increase productivity and skill levels so we move to a high-value, high-wage economy that ensures economic growth, and provides a better standard of living for New Zealanders. New Zealanders also really care about quality of life, for themselves, their families and communities.

Quality flexible work is one way of providing New Zealanders with opportunities to contribute effectively at work while meeting their other responsibilities and desire for quality of life outside work.

Quality flexible work is important for workplaces

Research shows that there are significant business benefits from implementing flexible work practices that, in a tight labour market, can give workplaces a competitive advantage. These benefits can include:

- improved recruitment and retention rates, with associated cost savings;
- reduced absenteeism and sick leave usage;
- a reduction in worker stress and improvements in employee satisfaction and loyalty;
- greater flexibility for business operating hours;
- improved productivity; and

- improved corporate image, becoming an 'employer of choice'.

However some employers can find it hard to implement and manage flexible work arrangements, and in some types of jobs some arrangements, such as working from home, are not possible.

Quality flexible work is important for individuals

They are better able to:

- effectively manage multiple responsibilities at home, work and in the community;
- effectively manage transitions in life such as moving into retirement; and
- participate more in family life, and community, cultural and recreational activities

It may also help to reduce travel time and congestion on roads and public transport.

Quality flexible work is important for families and communities

Over the past 20 years the demands of the modern workplace are perceived to have impacted heavily on family and community life. Parenting requires time, an ageing population means eldercare is becoming more significant and personal time, including for sports or working in the community, is shrinking. At some point in their lives most people need to manage transitions, whether it is caring for children or older parents, moving towards retirement or taking up learning opportunities. Flexible work arrangements can also have other positive spin-offs, such as reducing travel times and peak traffic congestion.



QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK THE RANGE OF APPROACHES

Government, businesses and unions agree that quality flexible work is important for employers and employees. We are already working on a range of initiatives but the real challenge is to make flexible work meet the needs of many more businesses, workplaces and individuals.

There are a number of approaches that can be used to increase the availability and take up of flexible work in New Zealand. These include education and promotion, active support and guidance, and legislated rights or processes. They cover employers, employees and workplaces. These approaches are summarised here and discussed in detail on pages 12 to 16.

It may be that we need a number of different approaches to make sure that we get it right for small employers as well as large employers, for different types of employees, for differing individual circumstances and for different types of work.

HOW CAN THE ABILITY OF *EMPLOYERS* TO INTRODUCE AND MANAGE FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS BE INCREASED?

For employers it is important that:

- they have access to information and advice they can use;
- processes are simple and easy to implement;
- processes can be implemented without advantaging some employees over others so that everyone can be treated fairly;
- benefits outweigh costs; and
- business needs can be met.

Possible approaches include:

- Providing employers with information about flexible work options and their management. Examples include:
 - “how to” guide for dealing with requests (print and web-based)
 - policy templates for flexible work, part time work, working from home etc
- Providing employers with more active support about flexible work options such as web-based or phone-line support.

HOW CAN THE ABILITY OF *EMPLOYEES* TO ACCESS AND USE QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK BE INCREASED?

For employees it is important that they know what is available and they feel:

- they can make a request – the environment is supportive;
- the request will be dealt with reasonably – there is a transparent and consistent process for assessing requests; and
- the decision will be adhered to – the process is secure and sustainable.

Possible approaches include:

- Providing employees with more information about the existing provisions of the Employment Relations Act that enable employees to request changes to working conditions. Examples include:

- brochures made available in workplaces
- web-based information
- information provided by workplace union delegates, and/or employers
- Providing employees with support to make requests. Examples include:
 - a “how to” guide for requesting flexible work
 - templates for asking for or justifying a request
 - web-based or phone-line support for making requests
 - support provided by workplace union delegates
- Providing legislation with more specific provisions about employees’ rights to request flexible work arrangements. An example is introducing legislation that provides that employees can request flexible work and covers the process employers must use to consider the request and the permissible grounds for refusal.

Possible approaches include:

- Providing formalised guidance on how to implement and manage quality flexible work options. An example is a “code for flexible working”.
- Government, unions and businesses jointly developing and promoting information and tools for implementing quality flexible work. Examples include:
 - joint seminars and training on a range of flexible work practices
 - joint resourcing for support services (web-based, phone-line)
- employers, employees and unions implementing quality flexible work practices at individual workplaces. Examples include:
 - using collective agreements to provide the framework for managing flexibility
 - jointly developing and implementing workplace initiatives.

HOW CAN WORKPLACES EFFECTIVELY ACHIEVE QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK?

For workplaces it is important that:

- any flexible work initiatives are fair to all employees; and
- flexible work is managed in a way that doesn’t impact negatively on the whole workplace.



SUPPORTING INFORMATION

QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK: THE ISSUES IN DETAIL

There is a skills shortage in New Zealand and it is likely to continue

New Zealand workplaces need to be productive and competitive now and into the future. The international skills shortage is predicted to continue. New Zealand now has more people working but we work longer hours than most other OECD countries. We can't work longer but we can work smarter – to lift productivity and skills and allow as many people as possible into the workforce. Quality flexible work is one way of retaining skilled workers and encouraging people to enter and stay in the labour market.

Demand for quality flexible work is strong

In a national survey undertaken in 2005, New Zealand employees indicated that, in particular, they wanted:

- flexible start and finish times;
- additional leave both paid and unpaid; and
- more say about how they work, including the ability to change rosters and shifts and to choose how many hours they work.³

New Zealanders need quality flexible work for a variety of reasons

The EEO Trust's Work and Age Survey of 2006 found that retired people would like to still be doing some paid work. For older people still in the workforce, the ideal transition from full-time work to retirement would be part-time work or more flexible hours.⁴

For parents, quality flexible work helps them to care for children, spend more time together as a family and to participate more in their children's lives.

As the New Zealand population ages, people need flexibility to be able to care for older friends and family members.

The EEO Trust's Disability and Employment Survey of 2005 found that flexibility around hours is the one most valuable initiative that workplaces could offer to enable disabled people to contribute fully at work.⁵

Other reasons New Zealanders need quality flexible work include caring for others, working in the community, for cultural or sporting commitments, to undertake study or for recreation and leisure.

Needs for quality flexible work change over time

People's needs for flexible work change over time as their life circumstances change - as people move through careers, parenthood, other caring responsibilities and retirement.

Flexible work arrangements are available in workplaces

There are many examples of good practice in New Zealand both in small and large businesses, and across private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

The most commonly available arrangements in relation to flexible work (ie available to all employees at more than 50% of workplaces) are⁶:

- being allowed to occasionally vary start and finish times; and
- having flexible break provisions.

Employers have said they are keen to implement initiatives such as flexible work but some say they lack the tools to do this.

3. Department of Labour 2006 *Work-life Balance in New Zealand: a snapshot of employee and employer attitudes and experiences* p40

4. EEO Trust 2006 *Work and Age Report Executive Summary* p1

5. EEO Trust 2005 *Disability and Employment – on-line survey analysis Executive Summary* p2

6. Department of Labour 2006 p27

<p>Take up of flexible work arrangements may not match availability</p>	<p>Having flexible work arrangements available does not necessarily mean that employees can or will take them up. Those with the least bargaining power may miss out. Department of Labour research suggests that almost a third of employees can find it hard to discuss work-life issues with their manager or supervisor.⁷</p> <p>A recent EEO Trust survey found that while many employers offered work-life balance initiatives, the average take-up was much lower.⁸</p>
<p>Some workers may find it harder to access quality flexible work than others</p>	<p>For some employees, particularly those with low pay, the need to generate a sufficient income can overshadow any need or desire to work flexibly.</p> <p>Shift workers, including those working rotating shifts and those working at night, may find it difficult to access quality flexible work and may have fewer work options available. People who work shifts, particularly those working rotating shifts, are more likely to experience work-life conflict than those with other working patterns.⁹</p> <p>For those in precarious employment (low job security, often casual or temporary workers) where work is already flexible, it may be an issue of quality.</p> <p>Some workers would like to work more (and more secure) hours not fewer.</p> <p>In some organisations flexible work arrangements are not available to all employees. Department of Labour research suggests that senior staff or management are more likely to be offered a wider range of arrangements than other staff.¹⁰</p>
<p>Quality flexible work means that it works for everybody in the workplace</p>	<p>Quality flexible work is about balancing the needs of the organisation, the workplace and the individual. This may mean that some flexible work options are not available in some workplaces depending on the nature of the work (for example working from home is not an option available for retail staff).</p>
<p>The gender dimension of work is important</p>	<p>Women are more likely to be caring for family members and have a lower level of participation in paid employment. Flexible work opportunities can mean that women participate more in the workforce but there can be pay penalties associated with flexible and part time work.</p>
<p>Flexible work arrangements differ between small, medium and large businesses</p>	<p>Small employers (up to 10 employees) appear to be very flexible in the range of working practices they offer staff. However as organisations grow in size, particularly for those organisations with between 10 and 50 employees, it appears to be more difficult to provide flexible working practices. Large employers are more likely to offer formalised flexible work policies but less likely to allow flexibility in the way hours are worked within the work day.¹¹</p>
<p>Many businesses don't see cost as a major barrier to implementing flexible work options but they are concerned about any additional compliance costs</p>	<p>Most employers do not think implementing work-life balance initiatives is too expensive.¹² But small businesses are concerned that options to increase quality flexible work may lead to increased compliance costs.</p> <p>In a recent survey by the EEO Trust, a number of organisations already implementing flexible work arrangements agreed that costs (financial or otherwise) were not apparent or were outweighed by the benefits of improved retention and productivity and reduced absenteeism.¹³</p>

7. *ibid* p39

8. EEO Trust 2006 *Work-Life Survey Report (draft)* p23

9. Department of Labour 2006 p17

10. *ibid* p30

11. Department of Labour 2006 p33

12. *ibid* p34

13. EEO Trust 2006 *Flexible work arrangements in New Zealand workplaces a report to the Department of Labour* p23

Unions and employers already work together to successfully introduce quality flexible work

There are already examples of collective agreements and work-life balance projects in workplaces.

The Department of Labour is working with 14 large employers to develop tailored work-life balance initiatives (including flexible work arrangements) for their workplaces. A key component of this is employers, employees and unions working together.

Flexible work arrangements have been negotiated in collective agreements. Of the 560 agreements finalised in the 2005/06 year (covering nearly 75,000 workers) 45% contained provisions relating to flexible hours, 41% to extended leave and 7% to change work status (eg between full-time and part-time work).¹⁴

Government has a significant role to play in quality flexible work

As a major employer, government has the opportunity to implement quality flexible work practices and lead by example. The government's long term goal is to increase productivity and skill levels so we move to a high-value, high-wage economy that provides a better standard of living for New Zealanders. The government is also aiming for a good quality of life for all New Zealanders, which includes child and family well-being, rewarding work that fully utilises people's skills, and balance between paid work and other parts of life.¹⁵

14. Victoria University Industrial Relations Centre 2006 *Employment Agreements: Bargaining Trends and Employment Law Update – 2005/2006* p45

15. See for example the Government strategy *Choices for Living Caring and Working Plan of Action* which covers how quality flexible work practices might better assist carers to have more choices about how they work ; available at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/general/gen-choices-for-living-full.asp>



SUPPORTING INFORMATION

QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK: THE RANGE OF APPROACHES IN DETAIL

1. How can the ability of employers to introduce and manage flexible work arrangements in the workplace be increased?

a. *Provide information and resources for employers to support implementation of quality flexible work.*

EXPLANATION

Develop a range of information and resources for employers that encourages and enables them to introduce quality flexible work practices into their workplaces including the benefits of quality flexible work; “how to” guidance on implementing and managing flexible work.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee:	onus on employee to make request
Employer:	can use resources but no obligation; still required to consider and respond to any request in good faith
Unions:	assist employees to make requests; bargain for collective agreements to have a framework for managing flexibility
Government:	develops and promotes information
Employer Groups:	promote information; provide employers with guidance on how to manage flexible work in the workplace

EXAMPLE

Business Link – choose the right type of flexible working (UK)

www.businesslink.gov.uk

This is a web-based interactive tool for employers to get advice on what might be the best flexible work arrangements for their particular circumstances. The site also includes other resources on flexible work for employers.

www.direct.gov.uk/Employment/Employees/fs/en

This is a similar tool for employees to get advice on what flexible work pattern suits them and how to build a case for requesting flexible work.

2. How can the ability of employees to access and use quality flexible work be increased?

- a. *Promote how requests can be made under existing legislation, provide employees with more information about quality flexible work, and employers with information to help them consider and respond to requests*

EXPLANATION

Develop a range of information and resources for employees based on the provisions in existing legislation in relation to the rights to request flexible work arrangements; benefits of quality flexible work; and “how to” guidance on requesting flexible work. Employers may also need information to assist them to deal with requests from employees to change working conditions.

Under the Employment Relations Act employees can request changes to their working conditions when negotiating or seeking a variation to an employment agreement. If an employee requests flexible working arrangements, employers are required to act in good faith and consider and respond to the request. In responding to a request, employers must not do anything to mislead or deceive, or that is likely to mislead or deceive, the employee.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee:	onus is on employee to make request
Employer:	required to consider and respond to request in good faith
Unions:	promote information on existing rights; assist employees to make requests; bargain for collective agreements to have a framework for managing flexibility
Government:	develops and promotes information
Employer Groups:	provide employers with guidance on how to manage flexible work in the workplace

EXAMPLE

Paid Parental Leave

The Department of Labour produces a paper based resource *An employee's guide to parental leave* that covers:

- entitlements for employees under the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987;
- procedures to follow when applying for leave; and
- requirements around returning to work.

Information is also available from the Department's contact centre and website www.ers.govt.nz/parentalleave/ including an on line calculator for entitlements, and information for employers.

2. How can the ability of employees to access and use quality flexible work be increased?

b. Provide legislation with more specific provisions about employees' rights to request flexible work

EXPLANATION

The right to request flexible work, the process to be followed and the grounds for acceptance/refusal could be covered in legislation¹⁶. The extent of the right to request could range from having a low level of justification for the request with few grounds for refusal through to higher level of justification and a wider range of grounds for refusal (see the United Kingdom example below).

Areas that legislation could cover include:

- Who qualifies for the right to request. Legislation could cover certain groups, for example parents with children or those looking after elderly dependents, or cover all employees regardless of whether they have caring responsibilities. Particular groups could be prioritised with staged introduction for others.
- What can be requested, for example changes to hours, place of work, and times of work.
- How often a request can be made.
- Process for dealing with the request.
- Grounds for accepting or refusing a request, for example business impact, performance, tenure.
- Process for appealing a decision by the employer.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee:	onus is on employee to make request
Employer:	deals with requests in line with legislation; makes information on the right to request available for employees
Unions:	promote information on the right to request; assist employees to make requests; bargain for collective agreements to have a framework for managing flexibility
Government:	enacts legislation, provides guidance on implementation
Employer Groups:	provide employers with guidance on how to manage flexible work in the workplace

EXAMPLE

The right to request in the United Kingdom

The UK introduced the right to request flexible work in 2003. It applies to parents of children under 6 years of age, and parents of children with a disability under 18 years of age. It enables employees to request a change to their hours of work, the times they work, or where they work.

It also establishes the process to be followed by employers and employees and the specific grounds employers could use for refusal. From April 2007 the law will extend the right to request flexible working to carers of adults.

For more information see Department of Trade and Industry *Flexible working: the right to request and the duty to consider – a guide for employers and employees* www.dti.gov.uk/files/file21364.pdf

16. This was the intention of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Hours) Amendment Bill

3. How can workplaces effectively achieve quality flexible work?

- a. *Provide formalised guidelines for employers on how to implement and manage quality flexible work options.*

EXPLANATION

Develop and formalise guidelines for employers on introducing and managing quality flexible work practices in workplaces. For example a code of good practice for flexible working could be developed, through consultation with employers and unions, under the Employment Relations Act.

Note: codes can be developed under the Employment Relations Act, however such codes are not binding (guidance only).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee:	onus on employee to make request
Employer:	can use guidelines to help manage flexible work; still required to consider and respond to any request in good faith
Unions:	can work with employers and government to develop guidelines; can assist employees with requests; can bargain for collective agreements to have a framework for managing flexibility
Government:	develops and promotes guidelines (with employers and unions)
Employer groups:	can work with government and unions to develop guidelines

EXAMPLE

Code of good faith in collective bargaining

A Code of Good Faith has been developed under the Employment Relations Act to provide guidance on “good faith” in bargaining. The Code also helps parties to identify all the things they should be considering when bargaining in good faith.

www.ers.dol.govt.nz/goodfaith/code.html

3. How can workplaces effectively achieve quality flexible work?

b. Government, employers, employees and unions work in partnership to implement and manage quality flexible work

EXPLANATION

Government, employers, employees and unions can work in partnership to champion flexible work across industry sectors, jointly develop and promote information and resources, and ways to monitor changes to availability and take-up of quality flexible work.

Employers, employees and unions can work in partnership to develop and implement quality flexible work practices at individual workplaces. Examples include using collective agreements to provide the framework for managing flexibility; or jointly identifying and implementing flexible work solutions and measuring their effectiveness.

These actions can sit outside legislation. An alternative is to require, under legislation, that collective agreements contain a framework for managing flexibility.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee:	involved in developing initiatives at the workplace level; can still make individual request
Employer:	involved in developing initiatives at the workplace level: still required to consider request in good faith
Unions:	involved in developing initiatives at the workplace level; works with employers and government to develop resources; can bargain for collective agreements that include quality flexible work
Government:	develops and promotes resources (with employers and unions)
Employer groups:	can work with government and unions to develop resources.

EXAMPLES

Collective agreements: Annualised hours for dairy workers*

Workers at New Zealand Milk Products, the manufacturing arm of Fonterra, are employed under a system of annualised hours. Dairy Workers Union technical officer, Angus McConnell, says workers are required to do a certain number of hours a year and get a regular salary paid out at a consistent level over 12 months.

"Once you've done your hours, you've finished your obligation," says Angus. The system meets the needs of an industry which has huge seasonal differences and gives workers a known and consistent income. It protects their existing earnings around allowances and gives them a known and guaranteed number of hours.

Angus says annualised hours have changed the mindset of workers and the culture of the workplace. Some staff work all their hours and then have extended periods of leave. Where there used to be a lot of overtime worked, "now they just want to do their hours and get out of there".

* From "It's about time: a union guide to work-life balance" NZCTU 2004 available at www.union.org.nz/

Leadership: Workplace Productivity

Business New Zealand, NZCTU, Chambers of Commerce and the Department of Labour work together to promote productivity and develop practical tools for workplaces. This has included the Productivity Snapshot Toolkit, workshops across the country on productivity and case studies of productivity in action.

www.dol.govt.nz/workplaceproductivity/



QUALITY FLEXIBLE WORK RESOURCES

NEW ZEALAND

EEO Trust

www.eeotrust.org.nz

Register to receive the free electronic Work & Life Bulletin with news, research, case studies and events related to work life balance

www.eeotrust.org.nz/awards/bulletin.cfm

Department of Labour

www.dol.govt.nz

www.dol.govt.nz/worklife/

Includes the report Work life balance in New Zealand – a snapshot of employee and employer attitudes and experiences

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions

www.union.org.nz/

Includes Its About Time! Union Guide to Work-Life Balance

State Services Commission

www.ssc.govt.nz

Includes Work-Life Balance: a resource for the State Services

Auckland Chamber of Commerce

www.chamber.co.nz

Includes practical steps for managers in considering a request for flexible working

UNITED KINGDOM

Trade Union Congress (TUC) Changing Times: the TUC guide to work-life balance

www.tuc.org.uk/work_life/index.cfm?mins=377

UK Government support for employees

www.direct.gov.uk/Employment/Employees/fs/en

Includes guidance on types of flexible work and statutory rights to request

UK Government support for employers

www.businesslink.gov.uk

Includes information on benefits of flexible working and an interactive tool for employers to get advice on what might be the best flexible work arrangements for their particular circumstances

AUSTRALIA

www.flexibilityworks.dewr.gov.au/

Online information and support for the retail sector