PEERING INTO THE MIRE

Legitimation and Consent to Organisational Change in Four Industries: Workers' Subjective and Objective Experiences.

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Like all other laws, it is modified in its working by many circumstances...
Thus spake Marx of the law of capitalist accumulation.

The same could be said of organisational change...it is modified in its working by many circumstances...
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ABSTRACT

The work is better and you don't get so frustrated, but you don't ever see anybody at work now which makes us divisive and lonely. I miss the comradeship. (John, Waterside Worker).

John's comment hints at the complexity of the worker's experience of workplace change. This thesis peers into the mire, interviewing 161 (mostly male) workers to ask how they legitimate and consent to organisational change, thus illuminating a significant gap in contemporary industrial sociology.

The thesis begins with a discussion of the socio-politico-economic environment of contemporary organisational change in Australia, setting the workers' experiences in a broad context. This is followed by a comprehensive review of the "employment" literature (including management and critical theory), which was conducted to establish an appropriate framework for the analysis of the individual worker's experience of change. It was found that management theory ignored contextual variables which were germane to the experience of the capitalist labour process. Critical perspectives, though, generally disregarded the individual in their incorporation of context. It was, however, established that a critical sociological framework could incorporate individual experience. Investigation proceeded on the assumption that workers had both objective and subjective constraints and opportunities which affected their experience of organisational change, and the interpretation of that experience.

Workers in four industries (public sector, mining, manufacturing and the waterfront) were surveyed by questionnaire and interview, providing data from which a grid of legitimation and consent behaviours and attitudes was constructed. It was concluded that legitimation and consent are both variable and related concepts. It was found, for example, that workers might legitimate organisational objectives, but not consent to managerial interference in how their job could best articulate with those objectives.

Different contexts of organisational experience and organisational change contributed unique expressions of legitimation and consent, complementing a common core of behaviours and attitudes.
Peering into the mire revealed, above all, the humour, insight and endurance which accompanies the worker’s experience of organisational change in the contemporary workplace.
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DEDICATION

This PhD thesis really started in my childhood, when my parents, Keith and Elsie Waghorn, gave me an upbringing which enabled me to think myself capable of achieving such an ambitious goal, and supported me when I leapt from the path which would have led there much earlier. They have never wavered in their support and their (often misplaced) pride, which was echoed by my grandparents, Alan and Evelyn Fiebig.

The last four years which have been subsumed by this thesis presented me with unprecedented challenges; life often became a juggling act in which work, research and home were tossed around in an uncontrolled and seemingly uncontrollable manner. My husband Matthew and my children Tim and Annie have probably forgotten what I’m like when I’m not writing a thesis (and hope I’m not the same!) but have seen it through to the end. There is as much of their lives invested in this thesis as there is mine, so it is to them that I dedicate this work.
This research was undertaken in 1991 in response to a growing sense of disbelief in what was popularly claimed for organisational change strategies. Described by one newspaper as 'the snake oil of the nation', enterprise bargaining as an institutional adjunct to widespread organisational restructuring in Australia was only one of many 'best' models which would result in spectacular working conditions and profits. The strategies for change seemed so easy - there were a few impediments to overcome, but these were structural in nature, and a deregulation of the industrial relations system would soon put them to rights. The heyday for the organisational behaviourists to take over workplace analysis had arrived as the industrial relations academics buried themselves in the institutional debates: was this the dawn of the 'new' industrial relations system in Australia? What would it mean for the Tribunals? How will the unions deal with change? Where would we all go? ...

None of these questions addressed my principal concern: Where was the Worker? Were there any workers left, or were we all going to be "organisational men"? (or, in enlightened analyses, women). What was going to happen to the sociology of the workplace - was it going to be absorbed into Human Resource Management, or sneak in via the "sociology of management" research?

My concern was thus to put the worker - that individual with a social and political history, present and future - at the forefront of the analysis of workplace change. I was encouraged in this by Ray Fells, my principal supervisor, and assisted in the process by the good-natured cooperation of 161 Western Australian workers. There was an incredible degree of trust in my integrity shown by these workers, who had to answer some very sticky questions, and I am extremely grateful for their frankness and honesty in a time when their working climate was least conducive to forthrightness. I am also indebted to the management personnel who gave me access to their workforces. It takes considerable courage to allow your dirty linen to be aired to someone external to the organisation, and they did so with very little hope or possibility of tangible reward.
The task of writing a thesis of this type is a challenging one, and I was supported in meeting that challenge by the wise and able comments of my supervisors, Ray Fells and Dr Ian vanden Driesen, Department of Organisational and Labour Studies at the University of Western Australia. They were as invaluable as I was often intractable. If Ray has greyer, and Ian less, hair as a result of this experience, I hope they will consider it worthwhile.

I received considerable support from other colleagues at work, including the small but growing sisterhood at UWA. In particular, though, I'd like to express my gratitude to three very special women. Lorna Duffy and Penny Fayle never wavered in their belief that I would write a scholarly thesis. Jan Burrows dealt with most of my administrative duties in the final stages and solved all the word processing problems without hysteria, thus earning my gratitude and respect. To use one of the many colloquialisms that will appear in this thesis, their blood's worth bottling!

A prominent place in my acknowledgements must go to my colleague Trish Todd, who gave me unfailing encouragement and an always willing ear. She is, indeed, a very particular, valued and dear friend.

There are many people who have helped along the way, including the Sheehy's (who are mines of information and a ticket to the waterfront) and Dr. V. Nilakant for some very wise counsel and an insight into organisational theory. In the unlikely event that others should ever read this list and not see their name, I would like to apologise for not acknowledging their support.

The usual disclaimers, of course, apply, and no-one but the author should in any way be held responsible for the following work.

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CHAPTER ONE

WORKERS AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE:
THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Tom had worked on the wharf for thirty years; he had a clear picture of who was boss and who was not, he knew what management thought of him and his mates and didn’t care - they were a clan who worked hard on their own terms, drank together in comradely defiance and occasionally held their country to ransom from the sheer strength of their solidarity. A proud and noble heritage; a lineage passed down from father to son through three generations of strong and sturdy working men. A “wharfie” to the press and the disdainful community who despised, yet envied, their power. A man who was paid even when the port was silent, with a pension to rival a public servant. A man who knew the expectations of his employer and who could rely on the union, and his mates, to keep those expectations realistic...

In 1993, the Waterfront Industry Reform Authority oversaw the final stage of the government-initiated restructuring and Tom’s working life changed forever: the old ways gone, along with the exit of more than half the senior Waterside Workers in an effort to revitalise the Australian waterfront with a younger, more technically skilled workforce. Waterside Workers were differentiated by a grading system which did not recognise length of service, and work teams were in competition for production bonuses. Rather than having their smokos together, meal breaks were staggered so the cranes could keep moving. The union pool was gone - employers recruited separately and some had even brought in casual labour. Tom was bewildered by the pace and force of changes which had left him regretting that he had not taken the “golden handshake” when it was offered. Was this what he’d agreed to when he’d voted for the Enterprise Agreement?
INTRODUCTION

Tom's is an extreme case of organisational change, an almost complete restructure of the known boundaries of the labour process on the docks, but its more moderate version is widespread throughout Australia. Yet, although government, business and the unions each have a declared perspective on the need for organisational change and the type of changes necessary to position this country as a significant trader in the global economy of the next millennium, the response of Tom and workers like him is increasingly disregarded in industrial relations theory and empirical research. This thesis seeks to illuminate that significant gap in current industrial relations research on organisational change by inquiring into workers' subjective and objective experiences of change.

Not shop stewards, or union officials, or representatives of management or any other group; just ordinary workers. What has happened to them in industrial relations theory and research? As will be seen in subsequent chapters, they are well-represented as personalities in a cluster of management-oriented disciplines, but decidedly under-represented in the critical theories of industrial relations. The following study was motivated by a desire to put the worker back on the industrial relations map - to take the logic of decentralisation to its appropriate destination, the shop floor; and to hear the voices of the people most intimately affected by the macro and micro-economic reform initiatives, individual workers.

This is not to suggest that workers should be lifted from their environment and herded off to a laboratory to examine them as if they were an endangered species. Quite the contrary. One of the strengths of industrial relations as an academic field is its ability to locate 'people' as 'workers' in an industrial society and, in endeavouring to understand their experiences of change in a meaningful way, it will be argued that workers must be located within the social and economic context of their society.
The Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey (AWIRS) reported 86% of 1,938 workplaces\(^1\) surveyed had experienced some sort of organisational change between 1988 and 1990 (Callus, Morehead, Cully and Buchanan, 1991:186). Moreover, as Australia shifts from a system of centralised to decentralised industrial relations with the focus on enterprise restructuring (Reitano, 1994:57) there has arisen a legislative climate which legitimises and supports the notion of organisational change. Indeed, the 1980s in Australia saw widespread changes in the economic and sociopolitical climates (DesRoches, 1992:2) which provided the background for organisational restructuring. The AWIRS study indicated the breadth of potential changes which may have been experienced by Australian firms: \textit{viz},

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(1)] major change in product or service;
  \item[(2)] major restructuring of how work was done;
  \item[(3)] new ownership of the workplace;
  \item[(4)] change to a more commercially oriented programme;
  \item[(5)] reorganisation of management structure;
  \item[(6)] change in senior management personnel;
  \item[(7)] introduction of new plant, equipment or office technology.
\end{itemize}

Each of these options accommodated changes which could affect the existence of a worker's job; his/her performance in it; the way work is structured or rewarded; traditional supervisory relationships; hours and place of work; and a range of other variables which have a direct or indirect influence on the employment relationship. The wider the span of the changes experienced, the greater the likely effect on the boundaries within which the employment relationship has traditionally been conducted and the greater the responsibility on workers and employers to deal with these matters at the workplace level (Macklin, Goodwin and Docherty, 1992:3). Thus, a potential contradiction emerges: although devolving increasing responsibility to the shop floor for successful implementation, the impetus for organisational change nonetheless arose far from the workplace, in the boardrooms and corridors of our largest employing, government and union institutions. There is a potential gap between what is sought and what can realistically be

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\(^1\) AWIRS accepted that a workplace could be any one of a number of separate locations where the company conducted business and if there was more than one location, used the largest of these workplaces in its survey (Isaac, 1993:1). My study defines the workplace in terms of the subjects: as the place where people go to work.
delivered - a gap which is left largely uncharted by surveys such as AWIRS which seek the views of managers and shop stewards and go no closer to the shop floor.

Many and varied are the outcomes from a carefully-designed organisational change strategy; some predicted, others unexpected, still more whose ramifications reach far down the years and pass into organisational legend and culture. It is particularly during times of change that accepted values, beliefs, attitudes and "ways of doing" are open to challenge. The process of change is not an entirely rational one, most strategies for "handling productivity problems...reflect ideological appeals to the discourse of science" (Wardell, 1990:166-7). Organisational change thus provides a vehicle for the expression of rivalries, interests, power bases and unholy alliances which arise as individuals respond to the threats and opportunities posed to their working, and personal, identities. Strategic change in organisations, then, is not just a catalyst for these events - the process of change is itself affected by the responses of people to it.

Worker legitimation and consent, as they related to workers' responses to the production process, gained currency in industrial relations theory during the 1970s and 1980s, and they are particularly useful concepts with which to direct an inquiry into workers' experiences of organisational change. Within the employment relationship there can be seen to be notions of consent, or recognition of institutionalised rules, and legitimacy, a sphere of normative orientation which is shared by management and workers and which serves to legitimate authority (Mahnkopf, 1986:47). However, employee and even managerial legitimation cannot be taken for granted: a "zone of insecurity" may exist even if the authority of management is normatively accepted (Mahnkopf, 1986:46). Thus, there is some scope for employee resistance to changes which may have their outward consent, and which may result in either partial implementation; implementation of the letter rather than the spirit of the changes; or other resistance or partial-compliance behaviours: "specific individuals may react differently to the same message" (Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder, 1993:687). Yet the concepts

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2 Indeed, new "materials, new forms of transportation, new ways of communicating, new ways of building - all these make entire careers obsolete" (Tyler, 1986:501).
of consent and legitimation lack a comprehensive operationalisation, and are used interchangeably, ambiguously, or inconsistently among and between theoretical perspectives. The interest which worker responses excite, and the relevance they hold for the productive output of societies, bear witness to the need to define and illuminate these terms in a meaningful way. Following a review of the literature in Chapter Two, Chapter Three operationalises these concepts and uses them to direct the empirical investigations of organisational change in four industries which are detailed in the Case Studies in Chapters Five to Eight.

The present chapter will begin by describing the macroeconomic context within which much of the nation currently labours; indicating how government, unions and business perceive the need for organisational change. Having established the perspectives held by the main institutional players, the chapter goes on to consider the character of organisational change which has arisen in this context and the impact this may have for workers and management. It will be found that the character of this change requires workers' consent and legitimation - their hearts and minds as well as their labour power. Finally, the chapter concludes by suggesting how workers' experiences of organisational change should be considered in terms of workers' subjective and objective environments. It is argued that this approach will provide a much fuller appreciation of the nature and experience of change than has hitherto been available in mainstream industrial relations theory.

Organisational change thus provides fertile ground for the investigation of human adaptation to a shifting terrain. Fertile and available ground, as most organisations and employees survive the considerable and, in some sectors, almost constant upheaval associated with contemporary working life. Yet it would be an empty analysis which tried to discuss workers' experiences of change without considering the context within which such experiences have arisen, so attention must now step back from the worker for a moment to consider the institutional perspectives - how the need for change arises; how prevalent it is in Australia at present; and what happens during the process of change which allows the emergence of certain workplace behaviours. From this point, it will be possible to indicate the importance of understanding the dynamics of change at the shop floor.
The Need For Organisational Change

A number of changes have taken place in Australia and overseas over recent years in production, marketing methods and business strategy. Amongst these are an accelerated rate of product obsolescence; rapid technological change; the saturation of certain product markets; falling levels of real productivity (Safarti and Kobrin 1988, OECD 1988); a move away from traditional mass production techniques towards small-scale batch production (Piore and Sabel 1984) and intensified pressure to respond more immediately to demand change. Such developments in product markets carry important consequences for the microeconomic functioning of the labour market: broadly speaking, firms require a workforce that is more adaptable in terms of numbers, skills, labour costs, and intensity of utilisation. (Rimmer and Zappala, 1989:309).

In March 1983, the incoming Hawke Labor government inherited a period of low economic growth and high inflation and unemployment (Macklin, et al, 1992:27). Unemployment had hovered around 6% since 1975, growing to 7% in 1982 and then to 10.2% in 1983, with a third of these people being long-term unemployed. By 1989, unemployment was down to 6%, but it rose again to 10.5% by 1992 (Norris, 1993). At the same time, inflation continued to be high by OECD standards: the average Australian inflation rate for the 1970s was 9.8%; for the first five years of the 1980s, 8.4%; and for the period 1986-90, 7.7% (EPAC, 1991). These last two decades have also heralded an era of unprecedented global structural change (Lansbury, 1992:16): the speed at which has been occurring and the rate at which responses must be forthcoming is unique to this age (Macken, 1989:4), providing considerable challenges for Government and industry.

The Government Perspective: Organisational Change as a Microeconomic Strategy

One of the primary mechanisms by which the Labor government has responded to these economic and structural imperatives in the decade since it gained office has been through a series of Accords3 with the trade

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3 The Accords have been described as "an alliance or partnership in government between the Australian trade union movement and the Australian Labor Party...the product of
union movement. The first "Statement of Accord" between the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in February, 1983\(^4\) was a macro-economic statement (Norris, 1990:128) designed to determine a prices and incomes policy for a future federal Labor government. This policy was renegotiated in succeeding years in response to national productivity, inflation and general economic indicators - not least of which were international trade performance figures. Originally concerned with a return to centralised wage-fixing (Lewis and Spiers, 1990:54), developing consultative mechanisms for tripartite industry and macroeconomic policy formulation (Bramble, 1989:373) and with a belief that wage restraint from the more powerful unions could ensure more equitable use of government funds (Bramble, 1992:154), the Accord became the vehicle whereby a more decentralised form of wage-fixing was gradually introduced.\(^5\)

Wage increases arising from the centralised wage-indexation framework since the Accord’s inception were contingent upon, and expected to be claimed with due regard for, national economic circumstances. The poor performance of the national economy in 1985-87 foreshadowed a postponement of planned productivity-based increases and tax cuts, and resulted in the abandonment of the wage indexation system. The reductions in tariffs\(^6\) and subsequent exposure of local manufacturing industry to international competition (Lansbury, 1992:16; Green, 1993:2) increased the scrutiny which was already being directed at work practices. A belief was widely held among OECD economists that traditional

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\(^4\) The Statement of Accord was reached prior to the ALP gaining office in March, 1983. The new Prime Minister, Robert James Lee Hawke, had spent a considerable part of his career at the ACTU, retiring as its President to take up the safe Labor seat of Wills. The Prime Minister’s background, coupled with the friendship between ACTU secretary Bill Kelty and the Treasurer, Paul Keating, both helped and hindered the relationship between the union movement and Government.

\(^5\) The types of strategies pursued by the Accord partners at the microeconomic level fit into the international trend of what Sabel (1993:1153n) calls "micro-(neo)corporatism, meaning plant-level cooperation."

\(^6\) The Australian economy had been undergoing a period of deregulation since the dollar was floated in 1983 (Macklin, et al, 1992:28) and the policy of tariff reduction which accompanied this shift towards operating in world markets exposed Australian manufacturers to international competition (Green and MacDonald, 1991:565).
Keynesian macroeconomic policies would not lead to growth - rather, market forces were appropriate to effect microeconomic change and an interventionist approach by government was detrimental (Rimmer and Zappala, 1989:310). Thus, Australian economic advisers indicated to the Government that deregulation and some decentralisation was the desirable policy to overcome rigidities and inflexibilities in the labour market (Whitfield, 1989:243). In March, 1987, the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) determined at the National Wage Case that workers would be awarded a flat wage increase and a further percentage amount which would be dependent upon restructuring and efficiency (Lewis and Spiers, 1990:54). This heralded a new age in wage-fixing in Australia and put the notion of workplace restructuring formally upon the industrial and political agenda, in a climate which was ripe for its implementation.

The creation of this climate had been encouraged by the ACTU/Trades Development Council (TDC) mission to Europe to study successful manufacturing and exporting economies and the release of the mission members' report, *Australia Reconstructed*, in July 1987. *Australia Reconstructed* paved the way, *inter alia*, for the active involvement of the union movement in income generation; including instituting “management and work practices to improve the efficiency of the enterprise” (ACTU/TDC, 1987: Recommendation 31[c]) in the push for international competitiveness. Following from this, Accord Mark IV addressed the problem of restrictive work practices by advocating restructuring industrial awards to accommodate labour flexibility and “multiskilling” (Lewis and Spiers, 1990:66). The award restructuring agenda included widening job classifications and encouraging skill

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7 The AIRC is independent of Government, but it takes submissions from Government as part of its deliberations in National Wage Cases. It has also been bound to give due consideration to the public interest, though this clause of the Industrial Relations Act is now under review. The AIRC has been widely regarded as having done more to further the decentralisation of the system than has the legislative reform of the 1980s and 1990s.

8 Davis (1990:105) quoted Laurie Carmichael, one of the Mission delegates, at the 1989 ACTU Congress: “unions must push employers to ‘carve a bigger slice of industrial trade’”.

9 Multiskilling “is defined as a process for increasing a worker’s range of skills so that a greater range of tasks can be performed, often across previously different occupational specializations” (Meuiller, 1992:320).

10 Industrial awards in Australia govern the terms and conditions of employment, are legally enforceable and have their origins in the craft-based occupations of the early part of this century (Curtain and Mathews, 1990:61).
acquisition across traditional job boundaries (Curtain and Mathews, 1990:62). Wage increases were linked to such improvements in productivity as were available through restructured awards. When demonstrable achievements were categorised by the Structural Efficiency Principle in the August 1988 National Wage Case (Sappey and Winter, 1992:33), the stage was set for the introduction of decentralised, enterprise bargaining.

The Government’s thrust toward national productivity increases via the microeconomic strategies of labour market and industrial relations reforms (Burgess and McDonald, 1990:44) culminated in the enterprise bargaining models of the 1990s and an industrial relations system based upon “managed decentralisation” (Argy, 1993:81). Made possible by changes to the industrial relations system prescribed in the new Industrial Relations Act (Commonwealth) 1988, the National Wage Case of October 1991 introduced the Enterprise Bargaining Principle as part of a package of policies which were designed to increase workplace flexibility:

- Wage increases from 1991 forward would be contingent upon enterprise-specific measures “designed to effect ‘real gains in productivity’ ” (Green, 1993:1);
- the Training Guarantee (Administration) Act 1990 was enacted to legitimise and facilitate skill development (Catanzariti and Youl, 1991:82; Waters-Marsh and Thompson, 1993:31) to ensure productivity improvements and persuade industry to view training as an investment rather than a cost (Waters-Marsh and Thompson, 1993:31);
- the role of workers in designing changes which could increase productivity in their workplaces, or of allowing the implementation of management-designed strategies, was enhanced by the Industrial Relations Reform Act of 1994; and
- government sponsorship in the 1990s of the Best Practice Program has directed not only rhetoric, but funding, to companies prepared to

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11 The trend to a managed decentralism, or what Hyman calls a “devolved decentralisation”, is part of an international shift which, while amplifying the role of enterprise level bargaining, does not altogether do away with industry level bargaining or state intervention. “Historically consolidated institutional arrangements create systems of vested interest, a heritage of assumptions, practices, and familiar relationships, which sustain a bias to stability” (Hyman, 1994:19-20).

12 The Government was also motivated to establish a training agenda which would avoid skill shortages in the next century (Baldwin, 1992:35).
oversee innovative and socially responsible workplace changes
(Department of Industrial Relations, 1994:2).

Workplace change and the shop floor have, through the process of
microeconomic reform, become the foci of the industrial relations system
(Morgan, 1992:4).

The Union Perspective: Consensus and Change
The widespread restructuring experienced in Australia in the last decade
would not have been possible without the active participation of the
union movement in the facilitation of strategies designed to help
implement organisational change. Economic imperatives provided some
motivation for this, but pressing economic circumstances had previously
faced Australia without engendering such active involvement by unions
in finding and implementing solutions to constraints on national
economic performance; though there is historical precedent for
encouraging consensus in industrial relations (Colless, 1984). Since the
early 1980s, the union movement has again promoted consensus in
decision-making; firstly in its desire to become partners with the Hawke
Labor Government in what it saw as the economic recovery of the nation
(Thompson, 1988:89), and then, by 1987, in its formal exultation of
tripartite decision-making at the enterprise level as a way to effect
sustained industry development (ACTU/TDC, 1987:77).

The ACTU has, during the 1980s and into the 1990s, become an important
player in policy development (Davis, 1990:103) due to the corporatism
established by the Accords (Burgmann, 1985:81) in the mid-1980s.
Through the Accord process, the ACTU became actively involved in a
series of Industry Plans, designed to improve the competitiveness of
industry (Ewer, Hampson, Lloyd, Rainford, Rix and Smith, 1991:76). The
existence of Labor Governments in most states and federally during the
1980s strengthened this partnership role between government and the
ACTU and equivalent peak councils at state level (ACTU, 1987:2).13

13 Maintaining individual union commitment to the Accords’ centralised bargaining
process was initially facilitated by factionalism and popular campaigns like industry-
based superannuation (Gardner, 1986:133) and the ACTU’s ability, due to its close
relationship with Government, to deliver benefits to the union movement (Gardner,
1986:141); but it was also helped by the undoubtedly high esteem in which ACTU
officials were held by union leaders (Davis, 1989:110) and senior Government figures
(Costa and Duffy, 1990:146). The 1986 move away from wage indexation to the two-
However, the worsening economic situation gave employers greater control in the industrial sphere, with threats of redundancies and closures gaining concessions from unions in their opposition to workplace change strategies (Gardner, 1987). The Robe River Dispute, a wholesale employer attack upon what it considered restrictive work practices (Copeman, 1987:542), was only the most extreme of a number of employer offensives on employment conditions and ways of working, with lockouts and dismissals predominating over strikes in 1986. Work practices thus became bargaining tools in the effort to retain jobs\(^{14}\) and the two-tier wages system was pushing the focus further towards the shop floor (Gardner, 1987:110) from where some believed the union movement would become rejuvenated as union organisers actively pursued member interests in bargaining over workplace restructures (Mathews, 1989:168).\(^{15}\)

With the restructuring of industry and a decline (ACTU, 1987:15) in the traditional blue-collar base of Australian unionism, the ACTU also recognised the need to develop a “strategic” approach to creating industrial awards and agreements which would not only recognise the new skills and occupational groupings of workers, but which would facilitate cooperation between trades and non-trades and their relevant unions (Timo, 1989:401). Strategic Unionism, as outlined in *Australia Reconstructed*, emphasised the need for “strong local and workplace organisation” (ACTU/TDC, 1987:169) to complement the strategies being pursued at the central level (ACTU/TDC, 1987:177) and for the need to make union membership attractive to Australian workers. Through the process of union amalgamation, the ACTU predicted that unions should be able to offer resources which would enable organisers to focus on “grass roots” membership while developing career structures for those members and officials who were prepared to make a lasting commitment.

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\(^{14}\) See Bramble (1993) for a discussion of bargaining in the vehicle industry in the contemporary climate. Unemployment was at its highest levels since the Second World War (Green, 1994) furthering the validity of Government and business strategies for economic growth.

\(^{15}\) Declining union membership, and a declining propensity to join unions (Kelly, 1994:136) have been matters of grave concern to unions since the mid-1980s.
to the union movement (ACTU, 1987:16). Thus, the focus of unions on workplace activity would not only facilitate protection of members' rights to participate in the process of organisational change, but would act as a conduit for grass roots involvement in centralised bargaining and policy development. The greatest challenge facing the union movement, though, is not only to be relevant to members, but to restate their legitimacy by adapting to the changing workplaces and differing roles required of them beyond the 1990s (Costa and Duffy, 1990).

The 1989 National Wage Case\(^{16}\) decision compelled employers and unions to demonstrate how productivity was to be improved before wage increases could be considered (Rimmer, 1991:7), but agreements negotiated at the industry level often faced “apparently insurmountable difficulties at the enterprise level” (Spooner, 1990:137). Resolution of those difficulties was increasingly attempted by workplace consultative committees (Lansbury and Marchington, 1993:65) which were being formed to help achieve the second round of wage increases (Spooner, 1991:121). The new decade had opened with the focus of bargaining devolving to the enterprise level. “The key issue in 1990 was whether employers and workers should be allowed to directly negotiate wages and conditions outside the centralized award wage system” (Mitchell, 1991:111). This issue was not resolved in 1990. The following year saw the recession deepen and unemployment higher than it had been since the Great Depression. Decentralised productivity bargaining was inherent in Accord Mark VI and the April National Wage Case sought to finally address these moves towards decentralisation. The era of enterprise bargaining was dawning, but the major players remained confused and divided over its appropriate form or definition (Mitchell, 1992:155). This concerned the Commission and, for the first time since Labor had taken office, the AIRC refused to ratify the Accord (Mitchell, 1992:154). By October, 1991, enough agreement had been reached between the parties and the Commission for it to allow enterprise bargaining principles in the second National Wage Case decision of the year (Mitchell, 1992:158). Although there was no National Wage Case in 1992,

\(^{16}\) The 1989 National Wage Case continued to refine developments which had begun with the 1988 structural efficiency principle, requiring that wage increase claims be accompanied by commitments to and demonstrable structural improvements in awards or agreements which would increase productivity. Wage claims meeting these requirements would be awarded at not less than six-monthly intervals, after application on an award-by-award basis to the AIRC (Norris, 1990).
662 enterprise agreements were ratified by the AIRC in that year (Green, 1993a:145). By the end of 1993, with Labor continuing to govern federally, the move to enterprise bargaining had become entrenched, with most Enterprise Agreements registered with the IRC being enterprise-specific and relying on the parent award only to provide minimum conditions (Kelly, 1994:143).

**The Business Perspective: The Desire for Productive Efficiency**

Up until 1972 and the election of the Whitlam Labor government, Australian business had enjoyed more than two decades of conservative political leadership. The uncertainty created by an avowedly radical federal government stimulated sectors of the business community to "educate" ordinary Australians about economics and human relations strategies. While it is difficult to assess their exact impact on the public psyche, the public awareness campaigns run by the Chambers of Commerce, Enterprise Australia and the Institute for Public Affairs certainly went some way towards preparing the stage for an employer assault on work practices based on free market economic arguments (Carey, 1987:31). These so-called restrictive work practices had evolved in the 1970s' climate of low unemployment and high growth, with unions pushing for better conditions and employers conceding to their demands, and were facilitated by an historic lack of employer activity in determining the scope and level of industrial relations bargaining due to the protections afforded to manufacturing industry by tariff barriers (BCA, 1992:18). The gradual removal of protectionism and the worsening economic situation of the 1980s had strengthened capital's resolve to...

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17 Labor was out of office in most states, which had Liberal or Coalition Governments introducing, or preparing to introduce (Peetz, 1992:330), industrial legislation which encouraged further decentralisation and a move to common-law, individual contracts.

18 Enterprise-level bargaining has been said to be "particularly common in the road transport, paper products, glass manufacturing, food, mining, wool, and chemical industries" (Macklin, et al, 1992:51).

19 "The necessary implementation of a vision is not simply a matter of choosing the right economic and policy levers to pull, nor even of ensuring an appropriate incentive structure and set of institutions is in place. It also requires a program of public education to achieve the necessary transformation in cultural attitudes" (Argy, 1993:10). The Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) by whom Argy's Report was commissioned, has been fulfilling this function since the 1960s.

20 Enterprise Australia has continued its education function, using the Australian Quality Council as an umbrella organisation to focus on quality initiatives in the workplace. It formed the Total Quality Management Institute in 1987 and inaugurated the Australian Quality Awards in 1988, and remains committed to "work with businesses on initiatives to help develop Australia's long-term prosperity" (Navaratnam, 1993:86, 87-88).
tackle what employers saw as a “backlog” (McGrath, 1989:419) of restrictive work practices and the “constraints” (Argy, 1993:66) imposed by the industrial relations system.

The move against the perceived excess of union power began in earnest in 1984 when a small number of employers sought to limit the scope of external union interference in working arrangements via the application of section 45D of the Trade Practices Act; then to pursue legal penalties against the unions involved; and finally to successfully sue for damages in the common law courts (Gardner, 1987; Kitay and Powe, 1987; Plowman, 1987). The impetus for decentralism came from the employers’ belief that the weak aggregate demand and increased competition faced by Australian business in the 1980s could only be counteracted by widespread changes to work practices and labour costs (Frenkel, 1987:96) - a belief that intruded into all industry sectors. At the Review of Australian Industrial Relations Law and Systems (the Hancock Inquiry) in 1985, a number of employer groups argued that the appropriate focus for industrial relations was the individual enterprise, and that the form industrial relations should properly take should be determined at that level - between the employer and the employee and without the intervention of external institutions such as unions and arbitration commissions (Kitay and Powe, 1987:373). The Hancock Inquiry, however, determined that Australian industrial relations should remain within a centralised framework (Hancock, 1989:267) and in response to this, a group of aggressively right wing industry leaders (the “New Right” in popular journalese) formed the H.R. Nicholls Society with the objective of keeping alive and current the topic of labour market and industrial relations reform (Plowman, 1987:86). Economic rationalists in an era when economic rationalism had the ear of Government (Pusey, 1991:5) and the unions (Ewer, et al, 1991:80), the New Right agenda was loudly challenged as extreme, divisive and

21 s.45D of the TPA prohibits the use of secondary boycotts as a legitimate form of influence over the way employment affairs are conducted, by outlawing union members not directly involved in a dispute from imposing a boycott on another firm.

22 “Work practices, are broadly, anything related to work or the performance of work, that affects the way in which work is done, [and] the conditions under which it is performed...Work practices may be agreed, arbitrated or imposed....they can be positive...or negative in that they unreasonably inhibit the efficient use of labour, curtail production or raise production costs to unacceptable levels” (McGrath, 1989:419).

23 The H.R. Nicholls Society is named after an anti-arbitration editor of the Hobart Mercury in the early years of the century (Plowman, 1987:86).
undesirable - yet was surprisingly effective in diverting the focus of labour market reform to the enterprise level.

Employers in Australia have been represented in the 1980s and into the 1990s by two main umbrella organisations, the Confederation of Australian Industry (CAI) and the Business Council of Australia (BCA). Participating in industry development via tripartite decision-making bodies established under the Hawke Labor Government, the CAI represented mainstream conservative business thinking, working within the existing parameters of the industrial relations system on its members’ behalf (Plowman, 1987:85). The BCA, however, was prepared to push for a move towards a decentralised system of industrial relations (Plowman, 1987:89). Gerard Henderson (1986:286) encapsulated the New Right position on industrial relations and the proper focus of the employment relationship when he posed the question, “What right has a government (or, indeed, a public servant) to decide whether a citizen is able to work on his or her own terms?”

This direction was articulated to much right wing acclaim in the BCA’s 1989 publication, *Enterprise-Based Bargaining Units: A Better Way of Working*. This Report had the effect of compelling the union movement and the government to develop bargaining strategies which could answer the efficiency concerns expressed by the New Right. Though the New Right represented the extreme conservative view on industrial relations, mainstream employers during the mid-1980s were also flexing their industrial muscle (Plowman, 1987:91), and keeping the push for decentralised industrial relations firmly on the government’s policy agenda. By the 1990s, “most employer groups had embraced some aspects of the radical agenda” (MacIntosh, 1993:53), with the newly-merged Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) taking a stronger line with government and abandoning the support given to the continuation of arbitration by the CAI in favour of a push towards

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24 The CAI merged in September, 1992 with the Australian Chamber of Commerce to create the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) (Hamilton, 1993:90). This merger has been seen to not only integrate employer thinking, but to take on board the small-business interests previously represented by the Australian Chamber of Commerce (MacIntosh, 1993:59).

25 Employers would generally coincide with the view that the industrial relations system in Australia allows “parties, or institutions, [to seek] to obtain industrial relations outcomes that are inconsistent with market indications” (Howard, 1988:34).
enterprise-level collective and individual bargaining (MacIntosh, 1993:60). Thus, although the ALP won the 1992 general election partly on the basis of the retention of the centralised industrial relations system, it did so only at the expense of developing an enterprise focus which enabled industrial relations centralism to exist merely in the role of a safety net (Dowding, 1993:11; Sloan, 1994:15). The early years of the 1990s witnessed a sustained confidence of employers in their managerial prerogative - their ability to assert managerial control over the employment relationship (Poole and Mansfield, 1993:15; Kelly, 1994:135).26

In addition to the desire to achieve productive efficiency by way of labour market deregulation, employers also articulated a belief that employees would gain greater job satisfaction and higher rewards from more flexible working arrangements (Angwin and McLaughlin, 1990:10; Geary, 1993:512; Lansbury, 1992:18). “Employee”, rather than “industrial” relations27 (Hilmer and McLaughlin, 1989:5) came to represent this focus - whereby the outcomes of responses to environmental pressures “would depend on mutual and ongoing commitment by employers and employees to workplace change” (Bryan Noakes, deputy chief executive, ACCI, quoted in MacIntosh, 1993:61). The AWIRS study indicated that Australian managers appeared committed to fostering a climate where organisational goals could be shared between employers and employees and where work should be “fulfilling” (Lansbury and Marchington, 1993:70). Despite these trends and the move towards productivity-related enterprise bargaining, however, there has been concern that concomitant changes in workplace culture and commitment have not been forthcoming (Argy, 1993:71), which suggests that the gap between what is sought and what can realistically be delivered does, in fact, exist. Indicating yet again the need to discover what is happening on the shop floor.

26 The confidence of Australian employers has undoubtedly been influenced by the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act in NZ. This Act abolished industrial tribunals and awards and provided for contracts between employers and employees without tribunal involvement and with no compulsion upon employers to allow union involvement (Peetz, Quinn, Edwards and Riedel, 1992:196).

27 Employee Relations has been described as inferring a cultural change within organisations, where the behaviours and attitudes of organisational members are cooperative rather than conflictual (Moon, 1991:127).
In order to cope with the flexibility required in its response to a rapidly-changing technological climate, Australian management has had to focus attention on the skills and abilities of their workforces (Smith, 1988:101): the "old 'factory fodder' attitude to employment in manufacturing, which relied on large numbers of low-skilled workers...is no long[er] part of the contemporary manufacturing approach" (Lansbury, 1992:18). Moreover, the skills and abilities of management are increasingly challenged by the changing imperatives of organisational performance (Argy, 1993:79). Management's interest in job flexibility, multiskilling and an increased prerogative to hire and fire (Wood, 1989:1) according to organisational requirements has presaged a need to 'get to know' the capabilities of people on the job. Furthermore, the National Wage Cases as they pertain to career structures have formally required firms to focus on 'developing' staff (Swain, Warren-Langford, and Francis, 1990:5). Personnel Officers (now Human Resource Managers) have evolved from spending most of their time on award-related matters (Wright, 1991:6), to organising or conducting training (Deery and Dowling, 1988:31), and to having an increased role as internal consultants on a range of employee-related matters (Moy, 1991:13; Limerick, 1992:46). Indeed, the role of the HRM specialist has been seen to provide Australian management with the ability to act strategically in "the conduct of employee relations" particularly in the process of organisational restructure (Curtain, 1992:1) and the practice of negotiating employee consent (Frenkel, 1988:176).

It is therefore apparent that the thrust for competitive advantage and productive efficiency has been driving the reform agenda set by business, and a strong belief in non-interventionism has underwritten the desire for decentralised industrial relations. Employer trends have assumed that there is a link between product and labour markets - "that to survive in a competitive product market enterprises should be able to adopt more competitive policies in relation to labour markets" (Rimmer, 1992:79) and that the working conditions appropriate for particular firms can best be negotiated at the enterprise level between a specific employer and his/her employees. These preferences have ensured that the focus of

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28 The CAI considers employers and employees to be the "direct" parties to the employment relationship (Niland, Brown and Hughes, 1991:1).

29 Abbott (1993) has argued quite persuasively that this link is not established in fact, however "voraciously" (p.151) it has been pursued.
organisational change has been directed at the enterprise level, and should remain there for some time to come.

Summary: The Context Of Organisational Change In Australia

The 1980s and early 1990s provided the federal government with a difficult economic climate and the first decade of exposure to globalism. One of their responses has been to make industrial relations a primary lynchpin of microeconomic recovery, resulting in industrial relations policy initiatives which have consistently addressed the issues of labour market flexibility in an internationally competitive environment and a decentralised industrial relations system (Peetz, 1992:333). This has culminated, in the 1990s, in Enterprise Bargaining, the Industrial Relations Reform Act (1993), which encourages managed decentralism, and government sponsorship of workplace restructuring through the Best Practice program. The workplace and workplace change have been established as important to government economic strategy, and they have been assisted in the implementation of these strategies by a series of Accords between the government and the ACTU.

The decentralisation associated with changes to the Industrial Relations Act and the effect of the structural efficiency and enterprise bargaining principles arising from National Wage Case decisions, coupled with a desire to stimulate and increase worker participation in union and workplace decision-making, has brought the workplace to the forefront of union policy initiatives. The challenge posed by the labour market and workplace restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s to the traditional base and activities of unions persuaded them that the focus of the 1990s should be on grass roots membership issues - reinforcing union legitimacy in the new working climates. Rising unemployment and the need to secure members' jobs and social well-being contributed to unions' facilitation of microeconomic reform; and the renewed vigour of business in setting the agenda of labour market and workplace change has increased the need for central union policy to focus as never before on the enterprise level of bargaining and members' long-term requirements and role in organisational change.

The macro and microeconomic policy agenda of the 1980s and 1990s have been influenced by economic rationalism and a free market outlook.
This has provided a propitious climate for employers to initiate greater emphasis on the “direct” employment relationship, that between an employer and an employee, in order to create a more flexible labour force for globally competitive markets. Employer consonance at peak council level has resulted in considerable pressure upon government and unions to deliver labour market and industrial relations reform. The strong link advocated by employers between labour market flexibility and productivity have kept the spotlight very firmly on work practices in the last decade.

The 1980s and 1990s have seen, and continue to provide, an unprecedented interest in the labour process as a means of providing a stable and competitive economy with a productive and efficient workforce. This climate requires different responses from the major institutional actors, and alternative strategies by which they can each attempt to achieve their objectives. The managed decentralism strategy of the federal government desires socially-responsible changes, seeking to protect workers from arbitrary decisions at work. Unions, in their response to economic imperatives, have cooperated in redesigning job boundaries and work practices, but they have often risked member disaffiliation in the process. They must therefore monitor the pace and type of change and ensure their members continue to regard the union role as a relevant and benevolent one. Employers, on the other hand, while seeking to initiate change, are compelled to control and direct it to ensure the outcomes of change are in accordance with managerial objectives.

The focus of Australian industrial relations has thus been on organisational change, all the major players having specific and disparate workplace agenda: but the significance of this decentralisation can only be appreciated fully by looking at the dynamics of change. In order to achieve their desired outcomes, the parties in the industrial relations system need to understand the process of change and how this process affects the attainment of their objectives - an operation that involves an understanding of workers’ individual responses to change.
HEARTS AND MINDS: THE PROBLEM OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

The decentralisation of the Australian industrial relations system and its concomitant workplace restructuring has embraced changes to the structure, practice and semantics of the labour process. This change is widespread: recent surveys have indicated that no firm is completely inert in these times (Hill, 1991; Schreuder, 1993). Government, unions and business all have congruent and competing agenda for change, yet the types of changes they desire must be wrought within organisations (Armenakis, et al, 1993:682). Regardless how compelling the “talismanic presence” of economic imperatives may be to policy makers (Geary, 1993:511), it is on the shop floors of the nation that organisational change strategies will meet either their Trafalgar or their Waterloo.

The types of changes which have been introduced in recent Workplace Agreements include:

- work organisation, including the functional flexibility of the workforce, team work, quality assurance, continuous improvement and best practice strategies, consultative arrangements and organisational restructuring;
- conditions of employment, including arrangements on leave, hours of work, contract of employment, pay, penalty rates and allowances;
- working environment, including occupational health and safety, absenteeism, disputation and labour turnover;
- training strategies to equip workers with the broader range of skills necessary for the comprehensive approach to productivity enhancement adopted in many enterprises; and
- the use of capital, including rationalisation of production processes, continuous operation of machinery and new technology. (Department of Industrial Relations, 1992:5).

Most of these changes represent the need for individual workers to either make significant adjustments in how they perform their daily tasks; in their interrelationships with other workers or management; in the type of job they are now required to perform; or the degree to which they can control the labour process. The flexibility associated with team production, for example, requires workers to be prepared to change jobs.

30 "In general, firms introduce QCs and like schemes in pursuit of vague goals like 'winning the hearts and minds of the workforce' as one personnel officer put it" (Higgins, 1987:227).
more frequently and rely less on demarcated work roles. Quality assurance and continuous improvement require more “commitment, effort and discretion” from employees. Greater emphasis on skill acquisition requires workers to undertake training, and the adoption of work practices which are no longer concerned with job protection (one person, one job) evokes a need for greater job security (Osterman, 1994:183). In short, the type of organisational changes exhorted of workers in the 1990s demand their involvement not simply as automatons working to a different beat, but as people.

Moreover, the type of organisational change being experienced in the 1990s is presented in its own semantic context - the objectives for change being couched in terms of performance, (Dunn, 1990); flexibility (Littler, Bramble and McDonald, 1994); trust (Mueller 1992; Sabel, 1993); empowerment (Quinn, 1993); cooperation (CAI/ACTU, 1988; Lorenz, 1992; Wells, 1993); and goodwill (Bell, in Dowding, 1993). Each of these concepts implies individual involvement in the process of change, an involvement which is sought by management in a variety of ways. It has been suggested that management strategy can individualise industrial relations by marginalising or decentralising collective bargaining or pursuing single union deals; that the individualisation of work organisation can be achieved through functional flexibility and a teamworking and corporate culture; and that human resource issues can be individualised via performance-related pay and personal contracts (Bacon and Storey, 1993). Individual workers are, assuredly, targets for the arrows of change.

Flexible Labour

At the level of organizations, the flexibility debate is about competitiveness and responsiveness. This has not translated in a simple way to the level of individuals. (Mueller, 1992:315).

31 Indeed, it has been suggested that if large scale change is to occur, it is not possible for individuals to choose the option of “sitting on the sidelines and watching.” Nor may it be appropriate for organisations to “ensure every individual the freedom of choice in the change process” (Nielsen, Nykodym and Brown, 1991:87). Thus, if it is not possible to engender unanimous support for organisational change, nor to allow people to ‘opt out’ of the change process, the imperative to understand the role of workers in the process of change becomes even stronger.
Flexibility in the parlance of the 1990s can be described as “the removal of that ‘bureaucratic’ regulation which provides an obstacle to market-driven managerial discretion in labour deployment” (Pendleton, 1991:244) - which makes flexibility a highly value-laden concept. Although there is some debate about how well management can control the process of organisational change (Schreuder, 1993), it is undoubtedly desirable to them that they should be able to effect changes consistent with organisational objectives. Flexibility is a key aspect of management control, providing “additional opportunities to redefine, overtly and covertly, the power relationship” (Mueller, 1992:315) in organisations. Many types of control rest largely on the acceptance by workers of management’s right to manage or on the value the worker places on “personal privileges” which are within management’s power to grant (P.K. Edwards, 1986:231), and the legitimacy accorded to managerial prerogative with respect to labour flexibility has generally been accepted as given - a claim which deserves consideration. Not only is flexibility difficult to define in terms of a homogeneous set of practices, it appears the choice of practices is dependent upon the values held by management (Osterman 1994:179). This being so, these values are likely to be apparent to employees, who will consider them either congruent or incongruent with a) stated goals and objectives; or b) existing workplace norms. Moreover, employees may not consider the objective of flexibility to be necessarily valid: becoming more flexible in order to stay in business might be considered a valid objective, where trying to become “No. 1 in the industry” will not (Armenakis, et al, 1993:685). The task for management, then, is to deliver the reorganisation message in a form that is palatable to the recipient: to be “the boss without being bossy...the ‘puppeteer without the strings’...good-guy type of control” (Grenier, 1988:125). The logic of technological change, for example, sees management as the initiators and innovators, and workers’ input into new forms of work organisation as essential to the implementation process ((Laumann, Nadler and O’Farrell, 1991:5-7). Within this framework, management’s prerogative to introduce technological change is legitimated (Wilkinson, 1983:24) and the “political processes and social choices which lie behind innovative efforts” is concealed (Wilkinson, 1983:18).
The impact and scope of change is certainly broad enough to encourage a variety of responses to the changes made under the auspices of labour flexibility.

[Labour] flexibility depends upon trust between labour and management. It implies that workers are willing to forego efforts to establish and enforce individually or through collective action substantive work rules that fix the allocation of work, transfer among jobs, and workloads. Organizational flexibility also implies that workers are willing to disclose their proprietary knowledge in order to increase labor productivity and the firm's capacity for innovation. (Lorenz, 1992:456).

An individual must therefore make decisions about work-related behaviour which will affect his/her perceived success in the workplace. To the extent to which the task domain "defines the individual's role and identity and connotes certain prestige and power, the individual may be reluctant to see that domain altered" (Ashforth and Lee, 1990:630; see also Frenkel, 1990:49) and may engage in defensive behaviours, though resistance is by no means the only preferred or likely response: rather, most employees will be concerned with how to survive the transition period (Ashford, 1988:20). To add to the range of possible responses, the cooperation required of employees in workplace change, particularly with respect to flexibility, is influenced by existing workplace norms (Lever-Tracy, 1987:337), and attitudes and expectations associated with the change process itself (Cordery, Sevastos, Mueller and Parker, 1993:706). That this personal involvement will not always yield economic or other formal rewards complicates the response process still further as informal rewards (Kanter, 1991:26), like recognition and acknowledgment, are sought (Landau, 1993) by individual workers. The suggestion that normative, affective choices govern much individual action (Etzioni, 1993) further increases the need to examine workplace change from the level of affected workers. It may be that cooperation is achieved not only

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32 Defensive behaviours are "reactive and protective actions intended to reduce a perceived threat or avoid an unwanted demand of an individual or group" (Ashforth and Lee, 1990:622).

33 It must be remembered, though, that individuals can covertly resist change (for example, through absenteeism (Frenkel, 1990a:56)), even while appearing to engage in "survival" behaviour.

34 Multiskilling, for example, if accompanied by a teamwork focus, is often introduced with the promise of greater employee involvement in decision-making: a promise which generates employee expectation of its fulfillment (Mueller, 1992:321).
through consent, but through legitimation - through a normative identification with the goals and processes of the techniques used to introduce change, and through a normative identification with the process and objectives of the changes themselves.

This may help explain why the results of organisational change are not fixed. Staff may become fully integrated into the new structure, or may simply wait for the situation to revert while maintaining the culture and relationships established under the previous structure (Weller, 1991:44). If management relies on engineering or restructuring as the sole agents of change, and neglects the human resource planning and development aspects before, during and after implementation of change, the benefits obtainable from the changes will be sub-optimised (Chaykowski and Slotsve, 1992:327). Additionally, if individuals who have been accustomed to use job definitions as part of their definition of “self” are in rapidly changing and flexible organisations, they may be able to develop a “mature self-acceptance” by focussing on an understanding of self which is less rooted in a stable job. The outcome being, that individuals may develop a greater sense of their own career objectives and be less (rather than more) likely to identify with corporate objectives (Limerick, 1992:49-50). Thus, the individual adjustment to change has implications for the shape of the organisation’s post-change form and culture.

Cooperative Efficiency

The type of organisational restructuring apparent in Australian and overseas firms at present is not just a removal of restrictive work practices and increased labour flexibility. Frequently, workplace change is resulting in the reorganisation of decision-making processes and chains of command (Mueller, 1992:314), and this type of change is expressed in a new workplace language. The current trend toward “a devolution of authority to front-line workers” (Littler, et al, 1994:3) is commonly accompanied by exhortations of empowerment and the veneration of

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35 Gerth and Mills (1954, Chapter 5) indicated the importance of conversation in persuading the listener and ourselves that our actions were expressions of good intentions, that the correct motives are guiding us and should direct our and their responses.
teamwork as expressions of ideology as much as the clarion call to productive efficiency (Poole and Mansfield, 1993:14; Smith and Morton, 1993:102; Littler, et al, 1994:3). Management-initiated change processes associated with devolution commonly assume that company-wide change programs will lead to organisational transformation and that the resulting change in structure will have an accompanying effect on employee behaviour (Beer, Eisenstat and Spector, 1990:158; Hill, 1991:411). Indeed, the primary place in 1990s industrial relations is being taken by “concepts such as performance, quality, commitment, [and] involvement” (Dunn, 1990:4) and the efforts made by employers to secure these concepts as workplace realities cannot be overstated, particularly in their attempts to establish an individual relationship (Dickson, McLachlan, Prior and Swales, 1988:508). “These new work organization and employee involvement strategies are typically thought to constitute a strategy where employees’ commitment and consent for organizational goals can be realized and maintained” (Geary, 1993:512). Although management initiatives such as total quality control and just-in-time do have a strong union-busting element, they also rely heavily upon cooperative management techniques, and depend upon a “multi-skilled, responsible and autonomous workforce” (Mathews, 1988:20).

Human resource management (HRM) is often the strategic vehicle by which these sentiments are introduced to the workplace. It “assumes that an organic management structure, initiated by top management, will lead to high trust relations, commitment to the espoused goals of senior management and owners and improved productivity” (Webb, 1992:475). Attention has been drawn to the particularity of individuals or relationships in engendering trust and the possibility of building trust relations even where mistrust previously existed (Sabel, 1993:1136).

36 Organisational change, of course, occurs within the strictures of capitalism and “an economy based on employment relations does require a distinctive moral orientation” (Dickinson and Emler, 1992:31).
37 I refer here to “soft” (Geary, 1992:252) or “progressive” (Curtain, 1992:4) HRM, rather than the “hard” cost-cutting approach to obtaining managerial control through HRM strategies (Geary, 1992:251-252).
38 Trust is defined by Sabel (1993:1133) as “the mutual confidence that no party to an exchange will exploit the other’s vulnerability”. Cooperation, which is used interchangeably with trust by Sabel, has been elsewhere defined without the caveat of vulnerability: “cooperation requires by definition some degree of structure inasmuch as each participant performs his (sic) respective responsibilities with the expectation that others in the effort are doing likewise” (Anderson, 1971:8). The concept is further
This must entail, however, "a circuitous redefinition of collective values" (Sabel, 1993:1149). Part of this redefinition can be seen to be occurring in the sentiments expressed by advocates of decentralisation of decision-making in organisations - where the role of workers is encompassing the ability to contribute to organisational innovation (Blandy, Dawkins, Gannicott, Kain, Kasper and Kriegler, 1984; Cole, Crombie, Davies and Davis, 1985:13) and reaction to change (Schreuder, 1993:734). Great claims are made about the potential for a changing orientation to work which can arise through a process of properly-conducted workplace change: "If you get these people truly involved in designing a process, as well as doing the job, then they are genuinely empowered; they can change their own work lives" (Quinn, 1993:1). The reality of obtaining this objective, though, might be fraught with unexpected difficulties - as Landau's (1993) study of a public sector workforce illustrates: workers both designed and implemented changes and then, notwithstanding their involvement, went out of their way to sabotage the 'improvements'.

If an organisational culture needs to be changed in order to make new initiatives work, the existing culture can display a "force and momentum" which makes changing it difficult (Westley, 1990:276). Even in the organisation where cooperation is already part of the organisational culture, it is still possible for individual critical examination and action - this being part of the complexity of working life (Golden, 1992). Thus, managerial adherence to a unitary ideology (Poole and Mansfield, 1993:14), as exemplified by current HRM strategies (Haworth, 1989; Wells, 1993:57), can increase the likelihood of divergent control systems operating in an organisation (Fox, 1966:11; Webb, 1992). Observations of workplaces suggest that workers and management are subject to a range of controls and challenges which both determine and are a response to the formalisational and sectional options available (Storey, 1980:123). Structures established in the interests of efficiency, therefore, may be used to legitimate politically astute objectives regarding the social organisation of work (Wilkinson, 1983:25; Bourricaud, 1987) - an observation to which employees are not blind, and which may decrease the amount of cooperation they will give to the implementation clouded by a definition of trust which has two dimensions: "you can trust that the other party is motivated to do what it says, and you can trust that it is able to do what it says (Kelly and Kelly, 1991:37, original emphasis).
of those structures. The thrust of the BCA’s agenda since 1991, for example, has been to secure a good “fit” between employees and the “business goals of the organisation” (O’Brien, 1994:21). Achieving fit is not an uncommon approach adopted, supposedly value-free (Dunford, 1990:133), as a central strategy of change (Dunphy and Stace, 1990:134). A problem with securing fit, though, is that there are individual differences in an organisation as to what constitutes fit (Dunphy and Stace, 1990:135), as can occur with any strategy which is introduced ostensibly to increase efficiency and whose actual contribution to efficiency is hard to measure (Wilkinson, 1983a:82). This further points to the necessity of understanding the perceptions of workers as they attempt to adjust to what they perceive as the organisation’s goals.

Organisational change provides a “highly uncertain situation” for workers (Ellis, 1992:53) and this uncertainty (Kanter, 1991:15) will affect workers’ reaction to the change process, influencing their involvement in it. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that workers will want to become involved even if their participation is sought (Reshef, 1993:118). Rather, it is far more likely that there is a range of individual difference in response and attitudes toward change strategies, and that “data must be collected from all workplace actors to produce high quality analyses” (Reshef, 1993:125). At its most fundamental level, the employment relationship implies a willingness to work in return for a wage, so the subjectivity of workers “becomes an important element in the production process” (Littler and Salaman, 1985:92) - particularly so when the organisation seeks to effect change. Should change strategies be inconsistent with what employees subjectively and normatively view as legitimate managerial behaviour in their firm, there is the possibility of management incurring an “authority cost” (Halaby, 1986:637) and a barrier to effective change. Indeed, legitimation has been seen as the “process whereby social knowledge explains and justifies social reality” (Cipriani, 1987:9) so the subjective orientations of workers both within

39 The importance of creating the right kind of person for work has long been recognised: “The main difficulty lay above all in training human beings to renounce their desultory habits of work, and to identify themselves with the unvarying regularity of the complex automaton” (Ure [1835], in Mathews, 1989:13). The ‘problem’ of achieving fit is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

40 The fact that unitarist HRM strategies for engendering cooperative workplace behaviours have been pursued in the face of a continuing union presence (Smith and Morton, 1993; Wells, 1993:57) argues even more strongly for the ‘decentralisation’ of research.
and outside work (Bray, 1986:141) will affect the degree of legitimacy they accord management and managerial prerogative in the change process. Yet the actors who have been largely absent in industrial relations data collection have been individual workers (Geary, 1992:252).

Management and workers are generally in agreement as to the "minimum level of employee compliance" with managerial direction (Fox, 1985:14). However, minimum compliance is not usually what is sought in organisational change strategies; particularly those of the 1990s. The problem of controlling the process of change in order to optimise the benefits to the organisation is thus an important challenge for management. Thus, in the context of organisational change, when management is charting a course which it perceives to be consistent with adapting to changing circumstances, it may feel it has the legitimate right to have its orders and directions complied with by employees.

The cost to the individual in not meeting management expectations is generally censure, lack of progression, or dismissal; but management also bears considerable costs in the mismanagement of change. If management neglects the implications of change for employees, they run the risk of incurring "lower productivity, skill shortages and associated cost increases (e.g., overtime or production downtime), and a labor force that is not productively competitive with technologically comparable firms" (Chaykowski and Slotsve, 1992:327). If management does not handle the change process well, they are therefore less likely to achieve the goals of organisational flexibility and adaptability.

In addition, high labour productivity is dependent on labour's acceptance of the legitimate authority of management in the production process (Bramble, 1989a:25) and, although some sense of legitimised authority exists, changing customs can change established perceptions of legitimacy (Hyman and Brough, 1975:238; Dastmalchian, Blyton and Adamson, 1991:11) and decrease employee compliance with managerial authority. Indeed, there may be problems with securing the legitimacy of the change process even in firms with "model" (Geary, 1993:532) industrial relations,41 and this may explain why firms have not been able to rely on

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41 Geary (1993:532) includes lack of strikes, non-unionisation, high wages, job security and "lack [of] a tradition of strong work-place solidarity" to connote good industrial relations from management's viewpoint.
a widespread change of employee behaviour associated with so-called new ways of working (Pendleton, 1991:241). If the change strategy is underwritten by the desire to achieve a good "fit" between the organisation and its environment, for example, the existing workplace norms as to the legitimate role of internal and external players may impact adversely on the change process (Wilson, 1992:35).

**Summary: The Problem Of Gaining The Hearts And Minds**

One of the difficulties for management in planning organisational change has been seen to be the uncertainty associated with its smooth implementation. Many strategic change models inherently assume that management has "perfect knowledge" (Wilson, 1992:32) about the predispositions of employees and are able to accurately predict the outcomes of the planned change. Yet the role of workers has been difficult to chart given that people may act in a manner contrary to espoused beliefs, values and attitudes (Argyris, 1992:463). This complicates management's ability to meet the two main goals of organisational change - adaptation to environmental changes and the ability to effect changes in employee behaviour (Robbins, 1992:276).

**CONCLUSION**

Workplace change holds a primary place on the agenda of the major players in Australian industrial relations who rely, in no small degree, on the willingness of workers to implement the changes deemed essential to organisational and national solvency. The labour flexibility initiatives pursued by Government, unions and, most vigourously, employers provide considerable challenges to workers and management alike. Organisational change, then, is problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is the matter of the organisational response to the change: change needs to be managed; quality of working life issues have to be addressed; and work has to carry on before, during and after the change occurs. These responses chart the progress of the change and are affected by the way workers react. This in turn has implications for the change process and for management in general.
Secondly, there are many conflicts of interest inherent in organisational change (Kanter, Stein and Jick, 1992:6) and it is during times of change that these are tested. The type of change required to adapt to modern economic circumstances has left management with the task of ensuring not only change, but employee cooperation with change (Dastmalchian, et al, 1991:11). If workers' responses to change are not considered by management, there may be considerable organisational costs: including unsatisfactory implementation of the changes; lower productivity and higher costs; and deteriorating workplace industrial relations. In some instances, the inability of an organisation to effect necessary changes may compromise its ability to survive in the marketplace.

Thus, there is the problem of the worker. The accepted wisdom is that people don't take kindly to change, yet workers may be active advocates for change. Given this anomaly, the mechanism of consent to change becomes intriguing - and raises the question of whether there are forces other than consent at work in the adoption of change. It has been suggested that the type of changes required of workers in these times demand more than "lip service"; indeed, that workers need to become personally involved to make these changes - a process that requires them to legitimate the need for change. Management's strategic choices in how to manage the industrial relations of change, then, depends to no small degree on understanding not only the workplace climate and culture of particular organisations (Hill, 1991; Golden, 1992), but often the orientation of individuals within that organisation (Dickinson and Emler, 1992:32). Yet, notwithstanding the "buzz of excitement" surrounding these new approaches, they are not complemented by "theoretical cogency and research findings" (Roche, 1991:100).

The following research seeks to both remedy the current epistemological vaccuum into which the worker has fallen and attempt to identify fruitful lines of further enquiry into the knotty subject of organisational change. The consideration of change will proceed from four fundamental assumptions: the need for the imperative for change and its

42 While our understanding of the types of organisational change is growing with the development or continuation of national studies at the enterprise level (AWIRS, WIRS and the Osterman survey in the USA, for example) there remain few multi-case employee-level surveys in industrial relations which locate the individual experience of organisational change in the contexts usually associated with the discipline - that is to say, within the social relations of production.
process of implementation to be deemed legitimate by the workforce; the need for workers to consent to the changes; the needs of management and workers to control its progress; and the need for a theoretical and empirical understanding of the process and progress of organisational change as experienced by the people who are required to effect its implementation - individual workers. The following literature review will examine existing theoretical perspectives on the role of individuals in organisations and their potential to affect their environment. It will then examine theoretical approaches to worker consent and legitimation. This will provide the conceptual background for an examination of the experiences of workers in four cases of workplace change.
Norris (1993:247) summarises the wage aspects of Accords Mark I to VI as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accord</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Wage Scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark I</td>
<td>1983-85</td>
<td>Full wage indexation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark II</td>
<td>1985-87</td>
<td>Wage indexation discounted for currency depreciation Tax Cuts Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>award paid as employer contributions to superannuation schemes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark III</td>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>Two-tier system:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First tier: flat rate payments to all workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Second tier: percentage increase which had to be the ‘restructuring and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>efficiency’ principle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark IV</td>
<td>1988-89</td>
<td>Percentage rise plus a flat rate payment under the efficiency’ principle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark V</td>
<td>1989-91</td>
<td>Continuation of structural efficiency principle: two-stage increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark VI</td>
<td>1991-[93]</td>
<td>Flat rate payment to all workers Further wage increases through enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bargaining.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In February, 1993, the Keating Labor Government and the ACTU released Accord Mark VII, which would remain current until 1996. This agreement (Green, 1994:100-101) provided for:

- Limited non productivity-based wage increases
- Wage increases through enterprise bargaining, particularly the continuation of organisational and job design changes
- Arbitrated wage increases in three stages (yearly from July 1993) if workplace agreements could not be established.

In August, 1994, the AIRC released its Review of wage fixing principles, indicating that the Australian industrial relations system had two formal levels, enterprise bargaining and an award system. The Commissioners went on to say:

The priority in this system is on the parties at an enterprise - employers, employees and their representatives - taking responsibility for their own industrial relations affairs and reaching agreements appropriate to their enterprise.

(AIRC, 1994:37, original emphasis).

The current wage fixing principles will operate until July, 1996.
CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON WORKERS IN ORGANISATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The individual worker in a modern capitalist economy is increasingly likely to experience considerable workplace change in the course of his or her working life. Yet, although the theme of organisational change is broadly disseminated across a variety of disciplines and paradigms, the role of the individual and, more precisely, the individual experience of change, is poorly developed outside the "individualist" paradigms with a psychological basis. In Chapter One, the prevalence and nature of organisational change was discussed, and the current trend toward a greater individualisation of the workforce was noted. The role of the individual worker was thus seen to be of increasing importance to organisational change strategies.

Behavioural responses to change have assumed greater significance as organisations seek to increase worker loyalty, commitment and trust in order to implement flexible work practices and break down traditional job protections. Chapter One suggested that it was thus necessary to examine the way individual workers legitimate and consent to the change process, the change imperative and the perceived outcomes of change. The assumption is made here that some degree of cooperation from workers is necessary to effectively implement organisational change, an assumption that is realistic given that most reactions to change are, in effect, positive. Such an assumption is predicated on the Marxist notion

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43 Homans (1951:313), looking at the individual in the group, called the individual the "person". I prefer the term, "worker", because it is a more social concept. "Worker" will thus be used throughout this thesis in order to place individuals within the structural, moral and economic context of the employment relationship in capitalist society - with all that implies in terms of freedom of choice in how, when and why to act.
that the process of capital accumulation necessarily involves ongoing change in the pursuit of technological and product innovation - and leads to the conclusion that organisational experiences are not inert and static. In short, workers are accustomed to, if not major discontinuous restructuring, at least incremental change in their working lives, and do not spend their time in a state of continual resistance.

It is not a common proposition to look at individual workers’ experiences of change from within a sociological framework of empirical inquiry. Indeed, as shall emerge in succeeding chapters, existing literature has taken a very sectionalised approach to this issue: “What sociologists call sociology is still a mixed bag of many different problems, modes of statement, and claims to knowledge - to say nothing of what non-sociologists hold to be sociology” (Dahrendorf, 1968a:89). Thus, industrial sociology and labour process theory are not very well informed by behavioural theories about individuals in organisations; and organisational theory is generally not particularly cognisant of political notions which locate individual responses within the constraints of a broader socio-politico-economic structure. What, then, can a review of the literature dealing with individuals and organisations offer the researcher interested in exploring workers’ experiences of change?

A literature review can have a variety of purposes: it can locate current research within the context of previous work; it can provide a strong link between theory and research findings; it can give direction and purpose to the research and can clarify the central issues and concepts with which the thesis deals (Ellem, 1991:40). There is a wealth of literature dealing with the subject of organisational change, and one of the challenges of reviewing even a small section of it is organising the various perspectives in a manner which can meet these objectives and thereby inform a particular investigation. There are a range of theoretical approaches which aim to understand the characteristics, purposes, outcomes and effects of employing organisations in contemporary society. Some of these approaches share common roots, others derive from more distinct underpinnings. All are, to some degree, eclectic in their borrowings from each other - none, suffering the common curse of the social sciences, are cumulative across disciplines (Roberts, Hulin and Rousseau, 1978:21). The messy map which charts a non-linear course for
the progress and elucidation of these theoretical schema can easily lead the multi disciplinary researcher to flounder on the rocks of pointless endeavour, but a careful navigation of recurring themes in a diverse range of literature may yet deliver one safely to shore. This literature review will follow such a course; negotiating the journeys taken by scholars in organisational theory; organisational behaviour; industrial sociology; and radical perspectives, in order to evaluate the contribution each can make to gaining a more complete understanding of how individual workers experience organisational change.

The foundations of current social scientific approaches to the study of organisations were laid in the utilitarian movements in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with small, though significant, contributions from European, especially French, theorists. The behavioural science perspectives owe their development more to European antecedents such as Weber, Durkheim and Freud; and their enrichment to the social psychology of Mead, Cooley and W.I. Thomas in the United States of America. Experimental psychology, with its "utilitarian pattern of thought" has also had a profound impact on the development of the behavioural sciences which have been, overall, "pragmatic" in orientation (Parsons, 1961:314). Whether one considers various movements or schools of sociological thought to constitute distinct and exclusive paradigmatic approaches to an understanding of social reality (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Gioia and Pitre, 1990; Jackson and Carter, 1993) or not (Hayagreeva Rao and Pasmore, 1989; Willmott, 1993), there has been considerable debate among social theorists as to the nature

44 Jeremy Bentham (1748 - 1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806 - 1873) were strong advocates of individualism, according the satisfaction of individual wants (utilities) primary motive force. Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679), John Locke (1632 - 1704) and David Hume (1711 - 1776) were all precursors of the utilitarian movement. The individualism which became popularised by the great thinkers of the Enlightenment is summarised in Hobbes' maxim that "it is necessary that we know the things that are to be compounded before we can know the compound" (Lukes, 1973:119). For Hobbes, society was "an expression of, a resultant of, the characteristics of individuals" (Homans, 1951:316). Mayo (1933:148) considered Rousseau and the English political theorists of the nineteenth century were "extreme psychological individualists" who saw a "civilized community as a mere horde of persons".

45 The French were, directly and indirectly, particularly significant in the development of sociology as an academic discourse. From the French Revolution came the idea that people can make society, yet, paradoxically, be subject to it (Gouldner, 1971:15): the Rousseauian "conception of man as born free but now living everywhere in chains...create[ing] society through a willing contract but...then subject[ing] himself to his own creation" (Gouldner, 1971:16).
of people and their place in social action and construction, and the most appropriate research methods which should be employed to enhance the understanding of social behaviour\textsuperscript{46}. Though not here relied upon for inspiration (P.K. Edwards, 1986), the perspectives of social theorists have informed a range of organisational analysis (Clegg and Dunkerley, 1977:6) and, of particular importance in the current context, these perspectives have contributed to the way in which the individual is assigned a theoretical identity as a worker in the study of organisations. They thus deserve consideration.

The four main strands of contemporary theory which have informed the study of organisations are organisational theory, organisational behaviour, industrial sociology and radical theory. The first two disciplines, although including some critical perspective (Thompson and McHugh, 1990), are principally managerial in orientation and the theorists who comprise them are hereafter referred to by the generic, "management theorists". The theoretical perspectives on individuals in organisations which will be discussed forthwith are:

- Organisation theory (OT) which Perry (1992:85) has described as "that discipline which moves between the discussion of what Max Weber's writings can be made to mean and the exploration of what computers can be made to say", has spent the greater part of this century as "a poor relation of sociology, psychology or engineering", according to Ackroyd (1992:103). OT focuses on formal organisations, has an 'institutional' approach (Clegg and Dunkerley, 1977:2) and is based on the classical management school of thought, which in turn developed from the contributions of practical managers with "little or no social science background" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:118).

- Organisational Behaviour (OB) is concerned with the behaviour of individuals in organisations and is based on the human relations movement, incorporating input from psychology and industrial sociology (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:118).

\textsuperscript{46} Psychological explanations of individual behaviour are developed in terms of the mind whereas sociological explanations are less idiosyncratic, "relating behaviour to its social setting" (Wild, 1985:3).
• Industrial Sociology is based on Weber and takes a sociological, rather than a managerial, perspective (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:118). This review will treat contemporary industrial sociology under this heading. Industrial sociology has as its focus the sociology of “employing, or work, organisations”. The main argument of the industrial sociology perspective is, “organisations are man-made, and, in their nature and operation, reflect definite interests and values” (Salaman, 1979:213-214).

• Radical perspectives are derived from the work of Marx. This group includes labour process theory, which has been described by Salaman (1986:113) as one of the currently “fashionable forms of sociology of work”.

These four perspectives on organisation will be considered at some length, the focus of interest primarily being their ontological approach - how they explain the individual experience of reality. The review will discuss how contemporary organisational analysis deals with the role of the individual in change, and the processes of consent to and legitimation of that change. At times, the scope of the review will be broader than the focus of the thesis would suggest, but there is no alternative to this course. Many scholars have contributed little to the understanding of the individual experience, yet their analyses have been influential in designing organisational strategies which impact on individual actors. Their scholarship, then, although indirect to the main thesis, is germane to reaching its objectives. The primary emphasis, though, will be on the individual and it will be seen that neither aggregated nor individualist approaches to the study of organisations and organisational members are, alone, sufficient to understand the dynamics of workplace relations in times of change.

47 Contemporary, as opposed to the more prosaic, managerial-problem oriented industrial sociology of Mayo and the early Fatigue studies.
I. INDIVIDUALS IN ORGANISATIONS

The study of organisations has often reified the organisation and, with a broad brush approach, diminished the contribution of the people within them. This is not to say, though, that the organisational level approach has no merit. There is some theoretical basis for the practice of focusing on organisations rather than individuals in organisations, as Herbert Simon (1991:126) noted.

We need an organization theory because some phenomena are more conveniently described in terms of organizations and parts of organizations than in terms of the individual human beings who inhabit those parts.

In this, Simon has echoed Weber's own view. Weber (1971:68) indicated the importance of understanding organisations in terms of how their structures and processes reflect and accept views about the legitimacy of control and power. Understanding such legitimacy served as a tool with which the authority relations within modern organisations and society could be analysed. Nonetheless, the reified approach has limitations.

Pfeffer has identified two major problems with what he considers the "overaggregation" of organisation theory. Firstly, using the organisation as the unit of analysis distorts the characteristics of differentiation which exist within organisations, particularly where studies aggregate "structural measures causally over individuals or subunits". The second problem arises from the manner in which "the elements required for rational action, such as goals or preferences and definitions of alternatives get produced at the organizational level of analysis" (Pfeffer, 1982:123-125).

48 Silverman considered reification to be one of the major problems with functionalist approaches to organisational analysis. As he argued, "the view that organisations take actions in response to their needs is [nothing] more than a convenient way of explaining history as 'what had to be'" (Silverman, 1970:67).

49 To assume that ownership and control are congruent and therefore lead to congruent goals is problematic. Although compensation and control systems may increase managerial affiliation with organisational objectives, it is by no means empirically clear that organisational rationality directs behaviour in the disaggregate, according to Pfeffer (1982:125-134). This critique of congruent goal behaviour has engendered much recent interest in what might be termed a "sociology of management" (see, for example, Prieto, 1993).
Yet there is some danger in relying simply on individual or aggregated attitudes to explain organisational behaviour according to Perrow, as attitudes frequently have little bearing on behaviour and one “cannot explain organizations by explaining the attitudes and behavior of individuals or even small groups within them”. This view calls into question conclusions from psychology, social psychology, sociology, symbolic interactionism, and leadership studies (Perrow, 1979:133-134) -

those theories that are derived from premises about behavior...are over-determined....On the other hand, there are significant regularities in our world....But at least we are less confident that the explanations for these and other regularities reside in our usual formulations of 'personality and social structure' or 'the nature of man'. (Perrow, 1979:137-138, original emphasis).

The study of organisations thus deals with very complex issues - none less so than determining what constitutes an organisation (Clegg and Dunkerley, 1977:6). The concept of an organisation being more than the sum of the individual motivations within it is a difficult one, but with an historical view (the organisation becomes the product of all the decision-making and structural changes that have gone before), the organisation is more easily understood in the impersonal sense. The relationship between the individual worker and the organisation is similarly complex: “Although it is unclear whether or not a person’s attitude toward the job affects his or her outlook on life, or vice versa, there is certainly a relationship” (Hall, 1982:11). Generalisations about the orientation of organisational man, economic or social man, for example, likewise do not live up to the complex realities of organisational life, as Roy (1967) discovered in his study of output restriction.

Clegg (1994:10), writing within OT with a critical focus, has described organisations as historically constituted, historically evolving, socially constructed and socially changing entities. Yet there is some room for human impact within these entities: Lukes (1974:54) noted that “although the agents operate within structurally determined limits, they none the less have a certain relative autonomy and could have acted differently”. The extent of the ability or desire to act differently, though, has been seen by Clegg (1975:51) to be considerably constrained by the public availability and collective recognition of rules in organisations
which encourage people to orient their actions towards those guidelines. Indeed, the “fact of the individual in the organization is a hotly debated topic” (Hall 1982:4) and the following sections give some indication of the type and length of that debate.

Organisational Theory And The Individual

These intellectual cults are not drawing greatly different inferences from the physical and cultural environment surrounding us....Like the widely differing and often contentious denominations of the Christian religion, all have essentially the same goals and deal with essentially the same world. (Koontz, 1987:249).

Early Influences

In the nineteenth century, Comte had inquired into the structure of society as a system (statics) and how society changed over time (dynamics), coming to the conclusion that social life was essentially unalterable, because people were “powerless to create: all that we can do is to modify an order in which we can produce no radical change” (Comte,1908:30). Spencer (1893:8-11) took this notion of modification further with a Darwinian concept of social, rather than biological, evolution in which self-interest motivated individual action. Durkheim was critical of Comte and Spencer, although he believed, as did Comte, in a concrete social reality which could be scientifically investigated, and proposed that a collective consciousness both encouraged and constrained individual behaviour. The function of the collective consciousness, then, was to provide some social stability (Durkheim, 1971:104-105) and the essential characteristic of social facts “consists in the power they possess of exerting, from outside, a pressure on individual consciousness” (Durkheim, in Homans, 1973:52).

Weber (1962:43) argued that people attached subjective meaning to situations and determined their actions on that basis; it was the task of sociology to take account of that interpretive facility and Weber (1947:115)

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50 There has been some cross-fertilisation of conceptual reasoning between the biological and the human sciences in latter years: biologists now refer to “phytosociology”, the sociology of plants (Williams, 1991:184)!
elucidated a typology of social action to that end.\footnote{Weber (1962:29), writing in 1920 just before his death, considered the interpretive understanding of social behaviour the definitive task of sociology.} Action could be oriented toward \textit{tradition}; dominated by \textit{emotion}; rationally oriented toward some specific end - \textit{werrational} action or, when alternatives have been adjudicated on the basis of their ability to lead to the desired goal, \textit{zweckrational} action. Based on Dilthey’s notion of \textit{verstehen}, or interpretive understanding\footnote{By 1861, Dilthey had distinguished between two systems of thought, "'the system of laws' (or simply, 'science') which has 'unconditional validity', as distinct from...the 'system of value laden and meaningful existence' (also 'world view'), which is not 'unconditional' but at the same time not simply personal" (Ermath, 1978:94-95). The latter, over time, became 'Geisteswissenschaften' - human sciences (Ermath, 1978:96).} social action theory was elaborated by Weber (1962:52) to provide explanations of social affairs "in terms of theoretical concepts that [were] adequate on the level of meaning". That is to say, that the subjective meaning attached by actors to events had to be taken into account when interpreting actions; though Weber argued that a personal understanding of behaviour was not a precondition to a theoretical understanding - "it is not necessary 'to be Caesar in order to understand Caesar'" (Weber, 1962:30).

Weber straddles a number of theoretical perspectives, joining other early theorists in the non-specialisation characteristic of pre-paradigmatic thinking. There are three "groups of characteristics" associated with Weber's model of bureaucracy, according to Perrow (1979:56) - "those which relate to the structure and function of organization; those which deal with means of rewarding effort; and those which deal with protections for the individuals." Although his most persuasive advocate,

Dilthey explained the difference between the natural and the human sciences:

\begin{quote}
[T]he range of the human studies is determined by the objectifications of life in the external world. The human spirit can only understand what it has created. Nature, the object (\textit{Gegenstand}) of the natural sciences, embraces the reality which has arisen independently of the efficacy (Wirken) of spirit. Everything on which man has actively impressed his stamp forms the object (\textit{Gegenstand}) of the human studies. (quoted in Makkreel, 1975:307).
\end{quote}

This distinction has developed into a dualist/monist dichotomy which has underwritten social science research methodology - specifically, psychological research. The dualist methodology holds that human beings as objects of research have characteristics which distinguish them from objects of natural science research. Methods which increase understanding, rather than the monist experimentation associated with the natural sciences, should direct social research, according to Groeben (1990:19-20), yet contemporary organisational strategy is, arguably, often predicated on monist research findings - particularly in selection procedures based on psychological testing which presuppose that certain testable personality traits can be reliably associated with organisational performance and fit.
Talcott Parsons, introduced a more deterministic perspective as his career progressed and eventually incorporated concepts from social action into his systems theory. Weber’s typology of social action has been interpreted by later proponents of the action frame of reference as a voluntaristic analysis of social behaviour, based on the presumption that individuals interpret and define their situation and act accordingly (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:84-85).

**Individuals as Social Beings**

Parsons, the eminent American sociologist and father of modern systems theory, followed Durkheim’s notion of society existing *sui generis*.53 Thus, he highlighted the sociological construction of the role of the individual in society:

Though particular orientations of isolated actors to situations may conceivably occur, this is a limiting case of secondary theoretical interest. The theoretically general case is that of plural actors, interacting with each other so that each concrete actor-unit becomes situation to the other; in the terminology I have used, each unit is both an actor and a social object. (Parsons, 1961:324-325, original emphasis).

In his most influential work, *The Social System*, Parsons (1951:3) wanted to expound a “conceptual scheme for the analysis of social systems in terms of the action frame of reference”. He believed that the interaction of individuals occurred under conditions which enabled the interactive process to be analysed as a scientific system:

[A] social system consists in a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the ‘optimization of gratification’ and whose relation to their situations, including each other, is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols. (Parsons, 1951:5-6).

53 Durkheim argued that society existed *sui generis*, “in its own right as an independent entity from the individual members” (Wild, 1985:20), a view congruent with his thesis of social facts and which formed the basis of Durkheim’s understanding of the social individual in industrial society.
Even values, which might at times seem idiosyncratic, were perceived by Parsons (1951:12) to be thus so only in relation to the extent to which they departed from cultural tradition. It was action theory according to Parsons (1951:18) which could provide the foundation whereby the "'stuff' out of which both personality systems and social systems" were built. Parsons' illustration of the profit motive indicated his approach to the normative role behaviour of individuals as articulated within the action perspective:

It concerns a highly generalized mode of action in which a highly generalized class of advantages is to be sought, which funnels all manner of motivation into a common channel. (Parsons, 1951:246).

Parsons argued that it was through action theory, specifically in his systems theory, that the functional focus of organisation and integration could be explored to more fully account for social action, and was concerned to provide an analysis which he felt could challenge what he saw as the limitations of the radical structural approach exemplified by Marx (Parsons, 1967:119). He was also critical of social psychology which, by attempting to extrapolate "from the psychology of the individual to the motivational interpretation of mass phenomena" or by acclaiming the existence of a "group mind", had confused the relationship between personality and the social system - not properly distinguishing the two (Parsons, 1951:17-18). Where in his early work Parsons had given more consideration to the social-psychological elements of organisation he later concentrated on the social structural elements of action (Dubin, 1967:522) and applied his notion of function to the variety of solutions a society could develop to address complex problems in order to continue to survive.

In iterating these functional imperatives, Parsons inverted the problematic of the pioneering social anthropologists, Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, and directed empirical research to identifying the structures which served these functions, rather than determining the function of observed structures. Further, as there were value

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54 Malinowski (1944a:50) believed that "all effective human action leads to organized behavior" and that it was "impossible to isolate the material aspect of social behavior, or to develop a social analysis completely detached from symbolic aspects" (Malinowski, 1944:152), thus popularising the view that it was necessary to study
dimensions to these imperatives and their structural bases, Parsons' (1951:12-14) approach clearly derived from Durkheim's (1971:104-105) view of society as a moral entity and the structure to which Parsons referred was a normative structure: "The complementarity of expectations...implies the existence of common standards of what is 'acceptable' or in some sense approved behavior" (Parsons, 1951:249). Individuals, according to Parsons (1951:250-251), were socialised into roles appropriate to the society to which they belonged. As the society was ever seeking equilibrium, a deviance from the norms associated with those roles was viewed as pathological. Yet this pathological deviation from norms was certainly evident; moreover, it seemed that it should be incorporated into investigations of social structure.

Individuals as Organisational Beings

In 1970, David Silverman advocated the action frame of reference as a method for analysing social relations within organisations. Silverman (1970:141) argued that "man is constrained by the way he socially constructs his reality"; that is to say, man makes society and society makes man and it is through an understanding of the meaning people attach to their situation and their actions that the sociologist is informed about social reality. Action perspectives have been seen (Weeks, 1973:379-380) to have provided a challenge to the abstractedness of Parsonian systems

55 Parsons was influenced not only by Durkheim and Weber, but also by Pareto and Freud (Parsons, 1951a:xi) and developed his approach to sociological inquiry within "the context of a major interpretive problem, that of the relation between the main traditions of economic theory and the interpretation of many salient characteristics of modern industrial society" (Parsons, 1961:316). When at Harvard, Parsons came under the influence of L.J. Henderson, a biochemist who had eagerly adopted Pareto's notion of equilibrium to the study of complex, interrelated social phenomena (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:61-62). Parsons considered the notion of equilibrium to be "an ideological, not a theoretical, question" (Parsons, 1961:337). Either one believed that there were empirically identifiable conditions which favoured stability and those which favoured a "change of state away from the 'stable state'" or one did not, according to Parsons (1961:337-338). Pareto did not put a value upon equilibrium: "It is therefore a monumental stupidity to say, as one critic said, that when I speak of a state of equilibrium, I am thinking of a state which I consider better than another state, equilibrium being better than lack of equilibrium!" (Pareto, 1935:68).
theory, with its high generalisability and use of concepts such as 'organisational needs' which are difficult to operationalise and test. The action approaches have given precedence to investigating and acknowledging the complexity of organisational experience - particularly with respect to understanding "how a measure of order is maintained in the face of inevitable changes" (Strauss, Schatzman, Ehrlich, Bucher and Sabshin, 1973:303). The interaction of external and internal pressures and changes was considered by adherents to provide a more realistic analysis of organisational events (Strauss, et al, 1973:319) than when the focus fell too heavily upon structural variables in the organisation (Strauss, et al, 1973:303).

There are a series of theories which have sought to explain individual behaviour at the workplace which Pfeffer (1982) has categorised as "action" perspectives. The first group, which contains theories which ascribe purposive and rational goal-directed behaviour to individuals in the organisation, all share some common fundamental characteristics,

First, behaviors are construed to be chosen. Second, such choice is presumed to occur according to a set of consistent preferences....Third...choice is presumed to occur prior to the action itself - rationality is prospective rather than retrospective in that actions are consciously chosen in the light of some anticipated consequences. Fourth, action is goal-directed...Choice, then, is value maximizing. (Pfeffer, 1982:6).

The second of Pfeffer's group of action theories contain the external constraint or situational control set. In these theories, action is based not on personal predilections, but on external constraints: "Action results from the pattern of constraints, contingencies, or demands confronting the social unit" (Pfeffer, 1982:8). That is to say that individuals are bound to act in a certain way by the situation in which they find themselves. This has a tendency to reproduce similar responses among people, "regardless of any individual differences such as in goals, needs, or other personal characteristics" (Pfeffer, 1982:120).56 Pfeffer's third group of

56 The conception of workers as constrained by their cultural life outside the organisation was stereotyped by Fred Katz's (1967:294) comparison of the social background differences between white and blue collar workers: "The culture of the working-class man is in many ways alien to the decorum and demeanor expected of white-collar members of the organization". This was because of the bawdy and brawny behaviours
action theories have an almost random, emergent process view of action. In these theories,

the organization is viewed as externally constrained and administrative action is focused around creating the illusion of competence and control to maintain support both internally and externally for what the organization or other social entity is required to do to survive. (Pfeffer, 1982:10-11).

Individuals and Structural Constraints
Other theorists maintained that the structural characteristics of organisations required role-appropriate behaviour and the most informative analysis could be gleaned from investigating how formal roles interacted with management objectives. Selznick focused on the functional aspects of organisation structure to achieve goals, arguing that individuals were "whole-men" not just "role-enactors" (Katz, 1967:303), that is to say, they were people with lives and influences outside work, and therefore did not submit their whole selves to the dictates of organisational exigency. Indeed, Selznick (1943) proposed that an organisation created an informal structure and that the attainment of its formal goals were modified by the processes of action within that informal structure. He did not, though, develop in his theory an examination of individuals within and acting upon organisations.

The potential inherent in exploring the relationship between structure and patterns of interaction which could optimise the achievement of organisational objectives was energised by the works of Woodward and Lawrence and Lorsch in the 1960s. Woodward (1965:242-243) assumed that "at neither manager nor operator level do people consistently behave rationally within the same system of rationality as that on which the organizational goals are based": Analytically, then

the central problem in the development of a comprehensive theory of organization is to determine the conditions under which behaviour inside organizations becomes standardized and predictable.

which Katz felt were admired and encouraged among the working class. Naturally, where interface with the (presumably middle class) public was required, these externally socially-induced tendencies would overrule organisational standards of propriety.
Techniques have to be found to describe systematically, and evaluate quantitatively, complex and intricate manufacturing situations. (Woodward, 1965:247-248).

Woodward found that there was a need for different forms of organisation structure - that no one structural form was appropriate to all organisational activities, a view supported by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967). Lawrence and Lorsch took this idea further by advocating contingency theory, which sought to synthesise open systems theory with objectivist empirical research (Fieldler, 1986). Contingency theory, although oriented to overcoming managerially-defined problems, provided a challenge to the universal principles of management theory and the flexible, organic structures promoted by human relations theorists. In contingency models, there are a number of sub-systems contributing to the overall system, which is geared to purposive action and, ultimately, survival (Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck and Pennings, 1973:174-175). The human subsystem is one of these. Individuals play a prominent role in these models and are seen to have needs which must be met in order to be able to perform effectively in the positions they occupy in the organisation, and within the constraints imposed by that position relative to others (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967:6-7).

Based on the work of Simmel57 and Homans58, Blau had earlier attempted to establish a theory whereby psychological analysis focussing on needs was modified to accommodate the sociological factors which impacted on attitudes to work. Blau believed society to be more than the sum of its parts; with social structure emerging as the outcome of social process. In his theory of power and exchange, Blau (1964:199)

57 The German philosopher, historian and sociologist, Georg Simmel (1858-1918), writing in 1908, believed that society "exists where a number of individuals enter into interaction"; the interaction always arising "on the basis of certain drives or for the sake of certain purposes". This encapsulated his notion that social phenomena were composed of two inseparable instrumental: "an interest, purpose or motive...[and] a form or mode of interaction among individuals" (Simmel, 1959:314-315). Simmel's dualistic conceptions therefore drew him to "the study of processes by which individuals continue[d] to associate in spite of, and because of, antagonisms between them" (Levine, 1959:24). Indeed, the interaction perceived by Simmel extended to his appreciation of power relationships, Simmel (1950:122) having the belief that power could not be exercised by the powerful without the complicity of their subordinates.

58 George Homans was also interested in mutual relations - specifically, those which emerged to make the group something other than its constituent parts in aggregate, an insight he attributed to Durkheim and upon which he founded his perspective of the group (Homans, 1951:317).

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viewed power as “the resource that makes it possible to direct and coordinate the activities of men”, the role of power being central to social integration and control:

It may be suggested that the distinctive feature of authority is that social norms accepted and enforced by the collectivity of subordinates constrain its individual members to comply with directives of a superior. Compliance is voluntary for the collectivity, but social constraints make it compelling for the individual. (Blau, 1964:200).

Individuals were therefore determined by the social constraints which provided the fabric of their existence, but Blau noted the role of power in shaping those constraints.

The way people dealt with those constraints was explored by Buckley, who was interested in the role individuals played in “choosing” to which of those influences or constraints they would give meaning. Buckley argued in 1967 that socio-cultural systems were determined principally by the intercommunication of information. His main purpose was to find out how common meanings arose and what relationship they bore to individual and group behaviour (Buckley, 1967:94). Individuals were considered by Buckley to interact and selectively perceive information based on the meaning it held for them; social organisation could thus be seen in terms of a set of common-meaning-based constraints in the ensemble of possible interactions of social units, a reduction in uncertainty of behaviors, or a set of “mappings” of behaviors and goal-states. (Buckley, 1967:94).

Within this process of socio-cultural creation, “the human individual not only controls, but creates and recreates much of his effective environment” (Buckley, 1967:99). Although there is some decision-making, or selection, implicit in this model, the theme of people and organisations as decision-making organisms had been earlier developed more fully by Herbert Simon and his colleagues.
Irrational Beings and Rational Structures

Simon was concerned with analysing an organisation via the integration of formal, rational decision-making processes and the irrationality underlying individual behaviour. Later developed by March and Simon (1958) and then Cyert and March (1963), the concept of administrative man reflected a deterministic view of human behaviour: "Activity (individual or organizational) can usually be traced back to an environmental stimulus of some sort" (March and Simon, 1958:139). That the environment could affect individuals meant that manipulating the environment could cause changes in individual behaviour.

Simon (1957:40) indicated how human "limitations" could be overcome by "good" administration: The "individual is limited by those skills, habits, and reflexes which are no longer in the realm of consciousness". Taylorism could address these limitations. But the individual was also "limited by his values and those conceptions of purpose which influence him in making his decisions". Administrative strategies directed toward loyalty, morale, leadership, initiative and organisational commitment could address these limitations. The individual was further "limited by the extent of his knowledge of things relevant to his job". That these limits were 'variable' and capable of being overcome was illustrated by Simon (1957:41):

a program which trained members of the organization to be conscious of their loyalties, and to subordinate loyalties from the smaller groups [sub-units of the organisation] to those toward the larger, might lead to a very considerable alteration of the limits in that organization.

This was an area which had previously existed as the "terra incognita of administrative theory" but which could now be addressed via training needs analyses and a range of training options (Simon 1957:41). The book from which these views are drawn, Administrative Behavior, was applauded by Barnard, himself an influential management theorist, as consonant with his own experience of administration (Barnard, 1957:xli). Barnard found Simon's work helpful to readers unfamiliar with OT in its ability to "protect them from many current false notions, e.g., about 'power', authority, [and] incentives" (Barnard, 1957:xlii). One of these false notions was that loyalties might lie external to the organisation.
That this was not considered by Simon accords with his conceptualisation of rationality. Rational behaviour referred to “behavior [which was] evaluated in terms of the objectives of the larger organization” (Simon, 1957:41).

The human being as a decision-making organism which was suggested by Simon was elaborated by March and Simon in 1958 and further constrained the view of rationality. The human at work was seen as

a choosing, decision-making, problem-solving organism that can only do one or a few things at a time, and that can attend to only a small part of the information recorded in its memory and presented by the environment...these particular characteristics...are basic to some of the salient characteristics of human behavior in organizations (March and Simon, 1958:11).

It was thus “safest...to speak of rationality only relative to some specified frame of reference”, this frame of reference being “determined by the limitations on the rational man’s knowledge” (March and Simon, 1958:138-139). What administrative man did not know, though, was that he was a more complex social being than the decision-making perspectives had allowed. As Selznick (1948:25) had argued, formal organisation structures “never succeed in conquering the non-rational dimensions of organizational behavior. The latter remain at once indispensable to the continued existence of the system of coordination and at the same time the source of friction, doubt, and ruin”. It fell to the group of researchers who developed socio-technical systems theory to bring social man into contact with administrative man for the purposes of organisational survival.

Social Beings and Organisational Systems

Informed by a psychoanalytical perspective and a belief in the importance of group relationships, two researchers from the Tavistock Institute,59 Trist and Bamforth, in 1951 published the results of a study they had

59 The Tavistock Institute was established in 1946 by social researchers who had worked together in the army in WW2, “solving special problems that could not be dealt with by the normal military machinery”. Most members of this group had worked for the psychoanalytically-oriented Tavistock Clinic prior to the war and, during its course, were joined by researchers from psychology, sociology and anthropology. At the war’s end, they determined to continue what they saw as a successful collaboration - hence the establishment of the Institute (Hill, 1976:27).
conducted on the effects of the introduction of mechanised, long-wall coal mining in Britain. The researchers considered the miners’ responses to the new system in relation to the pre-existing work situation. The study’s importance lay in its recognition of the socio-psychological factors which were inherent in work technology but which were also influenced by the work organisation itself. As consultants, the researchers at the Tavistock were concerned to establish systems of work organisation in which the social, technical and economic dimensions were balanced because they believed all these socio-technical variables must be addressed for the firm’s survival (Silverman, 1970:109).60

Trist and Bamforth summarised their analytic approach to the examination of mining work in a manner which highlighted what they perceived as the reciprocal nature of man’s influence on society and society’s influence upon man:

the longwall method will be regarded as a technological system expressive of the prevailing outlook of mass-production engineering and as a social structure consisting of the occupational roles that have been institutionalized in its use. These interactive technological and sociological patterns will be assumed to exist as forces having psychological effects in the life-space of the face-worker...[whose] own contribution to the field of determinants arises from the nature and quality of the attitudes and relationships he develops in performing one of these tasks and in taking one of these roles. Together, the forces and effects constitute the psycho-social whole which is the object of study. (Trist and Bamforth, 1951:5).

Walker and Guest (1952:156-163) further concluded that technological factors; job design; the level and type of social interaction; and reward and compensation systems all affected worker behaviour and motivation. However, although socio-technical systems theorists noted an “intimate relationship between the technical, economic and social aspects of organisations”, they failed to distinguish between what is, and what ought to be, in organisations (Dufty and Fells, 1989:55-56) - an omission

60 'Placing' socio-technical systems theory is difficult, because it falls between OT and OB. I have placed it here because it is a "systems" theory and, though it surpasses both OT and OB in combining context as well as psychological factors, it cannot be included with critical theory because of its 'value-free' approach.
which has led them to be criticised for claiming themselves "ideology-free" (Palmer, 1988:152). This has made them open to charges that academics who have regarded high technology as "benign" render sociology "ill-prepared to make informed comment about the ramifications of these changes" (Williams, 1988:4).

The open systems school was an advancement on the Tavistock's socio-technical systems theory, and saw the firm as interacting with the external, as well as internal, environments. It was its exchange with the external environment which kept the firm 'alive' in this view (Katz and Kahn, 1966:27). Katz and Kahn published an influential open systems model in 1966 which, although admitting sociological structures, was similar to the socio-technical approach, being largely a biological metaphor. Katz and Kahn recognised the contribution of individuals to a social system, but in an aggregated form:

All social systems, including organizations, consist of the patterned activities of a number of individuals. Moreover, these patterned activities are complementary or interdependent with respect to some common output or outcome; they are repeated, relatively enduring, and bounded in space and time.

If the activity pattern occurs only once or at unpredictable intervals, we could not speak of an organization. The stability or recurrence of activities can be examined in relation to the energet input into the system, the transformation of energies within the system, and the resulting product or energet output. (Katz and Kahn, 1966:17, original emphasis).

Katz and Kahn illustrated how this analysis could inform the understanding of relationships in a factory:

In a factory the raw materials and the human labor are the energet input, the patterned activities of production the transformation of energy, and the finished product the output. To maintain this patterned activity requires a continual renewal of the inflow of energy. This is guaranteed in social systems by the energet return from the product or outcome...The company which produces automobiles sells them and by doing so obtains the means of securing new materials, compensating its labor
force, and continuing the energy pattern. (Katz and Kahn, 1966:17).

This narrow perception of the seduction of workers into the capitalist labour process neatly overlooked the nature of proletarianisation and did not therefore allow a more complete exploration of the means of ensuring that the “patterned activities” reproduced themselves over time. That these activities could persist at an aggregate level, though, and do so in spite of individual aberration was explained by Katz and Kahn’s (1966:33) understanding of the nature of social systems.

Social systems are anchored in the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, motivations, habits and expectations of human beings. Such systems represent patterns of relationships in which the constancy of the individual units involved in the relationships can be very low. An organization can have a very high rate of turnover of personnel and still persist. The relationship of items rather than the items themselves provide the constancy.

Yet the very situation above is one wherein the nature of the relationships between individuals, both formally and informally, and the formal relationship between the individual and the employing organisation could be markedly affected by the inconsistency which high turnover exhibits.61

Summary: Organisational Theory And The Individual

This minimisation of the role of the individual has been seen to be common to most approaches within OT, which is not surprising given its preoccupation with structural and institutional variables. Where individuals have been accommodated into theoretical analysis, they are generally viewed as products of their environment and constrained by it. This approach has enabled OT scholars to aggregate individual experiences of organisations in their endeavours to explain and predict organisational structure and function and assert that, by shaping the organisation, you can shape the individual within it. Analyses which

61 It was just such a pattern of individual inconsistency which motivated Josiah Wedgewood and his brethren to encourage a “work ethic” and which propelled Henry Ford to offer the Five Dollar Day with conditions enforced by his Sociological Department - all of which have had considerable bearing on the individual experience of work!
take more account of individual responses in addressing the "problem" of the worker in the organisation have evolved within the last century into what has become a new discipline in organisational and academic discourse - organisational behaviour.

Organisational Behaviour And The Individual

Organisational Behaviour (OB) has its roots in the Human Relations movements of the twentieth century and, as noted earlier, has been influenced by both sociological and psychological perspectives on why people behave the way they do in organisations; evolving into a mainstream school of thought from organisational psychology, social psychology62 (Thompson and McHugh, 1990:245), sociology, anthropology and political science (Robbins, 1992:2). Its purview is wider than simply gaining an understanding of organisational behaviour, as the discipline seeks to contribute to management's ability to effectively harness that behaviour to the goals of the organisation. It has, thus, a managerial orientation - one that is in keeping with its antecedents.

Organisations and Human Nature

Concurrently with scientific management, in the early years of this century, industrial psychology was developing as an applied, consultancy-based discipline. Given that its proponents investigated workplace "problems" such as fatigue and employee selection, research findings were often confidential and it was not until 1915 that it emerged as an academic discipline.63 It was from industrial psychology and its assumption of complex, social individuals, that the Human Relations school arose.

62 Social psychology, in turn, had evolved from the small-group behaviour work of Lewin and Marenio, among others (Ackroyd, 1976:404).
63 The Health of Munitions Workers Committee was established in 1915 by the British government as part of the war effort. This was superseded in 1918 by the Industrial Fatigue Research Board which systematically published findings deemed to be of general use to industry (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:128). The National Institute of Industrial Psychology (NIIP) was established in 1921 to criticism that it was Taylorism under another name - a claim that was countered by the declaration that "the work of the NIIP was based upon sound psychology rather than on a mechanical analogue of the human being. It sought not to push the worker from behind but to ease his difficulties, and by this to increase his output and his personal satisfaction" (Lupton, quoted in Burrell and Morgan, 1979:128-129). Arguably, many organisational change strategies would make similar claims today!
Although the Human Relations school has been largely discredited because of the flawed results of its most famous empirical work - the Hawthorne studies at the Western Electric Company in Chicago from the mid-1920s to the 1940s, its approach to organisational study was original in its “sociological conception of industrial events” (Rose, 1975:104). Yet, though anticipating the action frame of reference in noting that individuals interpreted their situation - the “meaning which any person in an industrial organization assigns to the events and objects in his environment are often determined by the social situation in which the events and objects occur” (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1941:557) - the Hawthorne studies did not elaborate this point.

The Hawthorne researchers, especially Mayo, were influenced by Pareto in their framework (Woodward, 1965:244), but their central notion was a Durkheimian one (Ackroyd, 1976:385-386), the “imbalance” between the needs of individuals and organisations (Starkey, 1992:628). The eclectic nature of the influence, however, renders their exact impact unclear, with no “new and self-consistent frame of reference” emerging from the synthesis, according to Ackroyd (1976:387). Rather, the legacy of the Human Relations school was its indication that industrial sociology needed to understand both everyday workplace behaviour and the structure of industrial society and how each impacted on the other (Ackroyd,1976:406). Mayo believed that group values and norms determined the conduct of individuals (Starkey, 1992:628) and that the experience of life was a social one whose influence required considerable personal effort for even the social researcher to overcome: “Only by the most arduous experimental study and logical elaboration can [the person] win clear and socially untrammelled understanding” (Mayo, 1933:157).

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64 Pareto argued that behaviour across societies could be explained by individual dispositions, making him both “positivistic (in that [he] seeks universal laws of human behaviour) and psychologistic (in that his whole system of thought rests on the analysis of what are psychological attributes)” (Ackroyd, 1976:400). This perspective can be illustrated by the following, which was written by Pareto in 1916:

Let us take a given group of individuals. Certain conditions prevail, such as private property, freedom (or slavery), technical training, wealth, scientific knowledge, religion, and so on. Active also in the group are individual desires, interests, prejudices, and the like. The successive states of the group may be assumed as determined by these latter elements working in conjunction with the conditions. (Pareto, 1935:67).
While the Hawthorne studies had been influenced by the early work in industrial psychology which considered the "relationships between work, fatigue, monontony and performance, post-Hawthorne concern has been for studying the relationship between work, satisfaction and performance". That these Neo Human Relations researchers could not shed any generalisable light on the nature of man or "provide consistent explanations of work motivation and behaviour" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:143-145, original emphasis) has not inhibited the assumption that it is possible to cater for the needs of particular individuals based on what research has shown about individuals in general (Parker, Brown, Child and Smith, 1981:91).

A significant post-Hawthorne scholar was George Homans, who was part of the Harvard School of Neo Human Relations (Silverman, 1970:78). His central interest was in the "elementary" behaviour which individuals exhibited in the conduct of their daily lives and social relations, the psychological determinants of that behaviour, and the resultant group structures which arose from it (Blau, 1975:4). Homans (1951:332) emphasised "the process of organization, in a changing environment and technology, to meet needs, and how this process creates the culture that may then be taught to the new generation": as he saw it, a fusion of the social contract and social mould theories:

根据社会契约理论，个体的行为决定社会的特性……根据社会模具理论，社会的特性决定个体的行为。两者都错了但又都对因为两者都不可完成。（Homans, 1951:320）

Individual Needs and Motivations: Problems for Organisations
The concept that organisational strategies could be designed to meet people’s needs was stimulated by the work of an American psychologist and educator, Abraham Maslow. Although Maslow (1992:48)

Social psychology, the "study of influences of social processes, such as socialization, impression formation, and group decision-making, on individual responses", is based on the same premise that Homans favoured - that a group is "qualitatively different" from its constituent members, implying that individual responses "cannot be studied adequately without reference to the social groups to which that person responds". Aggregate individual responses are used to measure group characteristics, indicating that the "responses and interactions of individuals are the foundation on which group characteristics and responses are based" (Roberts, et al, 1978:36-38, original emphasis).
recommended caution in the application of what he considered a tentative theory of human needs, his work has been widely drawn upon since its publication in 1943. Provided an individual’s basic physiological needs were met, postulated Maslow, they could move on toward an attempt to satisfy higher-order needs. At the pinnacle of the hierarchy of needs was the need for self-actualisation - "What a man can be, he must be" (Maslow, 1992:44, original emphasis). Notwithstanding Maslow’s contention that little was known about the human expression of this need, in order to realise one’s full potential there remained the implication that an individual would require considerable control over his or her environment in order to achieve this state. Even the penultimate need, that for self-esteem, was seen by Maslow (1992:43) to involve the individual in a search for an environment wherein “independence and freedom” were possible.

Maslow influenced McGregor, Likert and Argyris, all of whom were psychologists (Silverman, 1970:82). These psychologists had an instrumental approach to understanding human motivations: “The administrator and the scientist are basically interested in the same question, namely, why people behave the way they do in organizations...Once they understand, it is an easy matter to predict and control behavior” (Argyris, 1957:5). Given that worker motivation was a "problem" for management, participatory management styles, which were supposed to address human needs, were the “most frequently recommended panacea...despite equivocal evidence” (Locke, 1975:457).66 Argyris (1957:7) considered that “all human behavior in an organization is caused by any one or combination” of individual, small informal group and formal organizational factors. Likert considered these factors to impact on the organisation’s performance: “Every aspect of a firm’s activities is determined by the competence, motivation, and general effectiveness of its human organization” (Likert, 1967:1). This was further illustrated by Likert’s understanding of the interaction between supervisors and “subordinates”:

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66 Participative programs, according to Rinehart (1986:508) can only work if recalcitrant workers become cooperative workers. Quality of Working Life programs are an example of this. Although broadly heralded as the “everybody wins” approach to work organisation, positive changes in productivity are dependent upon employees changing their attitudes towards work.
The more often the superior's behavior is ego-building rather than ego-deflating, the better will be the effect on organizational performance...[but] it is essential to keep in mind that the interactions between the leader and the subordinates must be viewed in the light of the subordinate's background, values, and expectations. The subordinate's perception of the situation, rather than the supervisor's, determines whether or not the experience is supportive. (Likert, 1967:47-48).

Hall, though, (1982:7) felt there was too much emphasis placed on these internal human factors. Economic factors which impinged upon individuals were also important and focusing "on factors such as morale and satisfaction deflects attention away from the fact that economic factors are a major consideration for management and workers". That economic factors could form part of a reward system of value to workers was considered by Vroom, in his expectancy theory of motivation. Although Vroom sought to explain individual behaviour, rather than propose a "general theory" of organisations (Silverman, 1970:94-95), expectancy models such as his were characterised by their "psychological determinism", according to Locke (1975:461, original emphasis). "The doctrine in effect asserts that men are powerless to resist the urges of their feelings and emotions" (Locke, 1975:462). Vroom's (1964:276) expectancy theory was predicated on the assumption that behaviour was "subjectively rational and...directed toward the attainment of desired outcomes and away from aversive outcomes" - which has led to criticism of it as being "a form of calculative, psychological hedonism in which the ultimate motive of every human act is asserted to be the maximisation of pleasure and/or the minimisation of pain" (Locke, 1975:459).

Where organisation theory often saw individuals being constrained and determined by their social situation, expectancy theory has concentrated on the interaction between individual personalities and their perceptions of aspects of their work:

[O]ccupational choice, job satisfaction, and job performance should be regarded as joint functions of individual differences in motives and cognized or actual properties of work roles. We should not expect to be able

67 Motivation, in Vroom's (1964:7) usage, referred to "a process governing choices made by persons or lower organisms among alternative forms of voluntary activity".
to account for these phenomena solely in terms of individual differences in desires and aversions or solely in terms of beliefs about or actual properties of work roles. Both sets of variables are involved, and there are important interactions between them. (Vroom, 1964:286).

The importance of individual cognition to expectancy theory was illustrated by the assumption that the structural situation wherein individuals found themselves did not greatly influence their behaviour. Vroom (1964:5-6) argued that “there is a lawfulness in the behavior of individuals which transcends the boundaries of applied fields” and asserted that it was “exceedingly unlikely that the behavior of persons in work situations is governed by processes that are basically different from behavior in other types of situations”. Expectancy theory has thus not placed any emphasis on the type of work undertaken (Aungles and Parker, 1992:19-20) so has, arguably, omitted a large portion of reality in its research. Yet the investigations which the neo human relationists undertook to verify and substantiate their arguments were considerable; upholding a popular view that the “art of management can be based on verifiable information derived from rigorous, quantitative research” (Likert, 1967:1).

Predicting and Controlling Individual Behaviour
OB as a distinct field of study evolved in the 1940s as a response to the bureaucratic control structures that had developed in the organisations of the time. The issue of labour shortages in the 1950s focused OB on how to retain and make productive a small workforce. Its conservatism replicated the pro-business environment of the 1950s and 60s. In the 1960s, with the Vietnam War contributing to a growing restlessness and radicalism in society, coupled with a labour surplus as the post-war Baby Boomers hit the labour market, OB research reflected a greater interest in quality of working life and affiliation theories and, by the 1970s, power and politics in organisations came under the spotlight (Pfeffer, 1982:29-31). OB attempts to understand organisational behaviour by considering a wide range of factors which may affect people’s experiences within organisations. There are three units of analysis in OB, the individual, the group and the organisation and there are four aspects of organisational behaviour which hold particular interest for OB theorists: productivity, absenteeism, turnover and job satisfaction, the last variable being one
which OB researchers believe to be linked to the former three (Robbins, 1992).

The main aim of OB is to help perpetuate or initiate behaviours which are congruent with organisational objectives (McCarthy and Stone, 1986:10; Thompson and McHugh, 1990:246) - the "goals of OB are to help you to explain, predict, and control human behaviour" (Robbins, 1992:5, original emphasis) - and this bias is evident in the way human behaviour is treated in OB texts. Behaviours which are not considered to be "of direct relevance to the production process", behaviours such as aggression, affiliation and prejudice are neglected or their emphasis deflected, as in the way aggression is dealt with through conflict theory where conflict is seen as something to be resolved, rather than as an inherent indicator of power and need imbalances in the organisation (Thompson and McHugh, 1990:247). The focus is on the role of the individual as the job incumbent and interest in the worker (or manager) extends only to the extent that job or organisational performance is affected by individual behaviour.68

Psychology, with its traditionally applied perspective and because of its interest in individuals as the appropriate unit of analysis, has enjoyed a fruitful collaboration with OB since OB's inception and has contributed to a "focus on practice [which] implied that one should be able to tell practicing (sic) managers what to do" (Pfeffer, 1982:31). This approach is most clearly identified in the field of organisational psychology, which is concerned with "developing theories of organizational behavior as ways of improving organizational practice" (Leavitt, in Pfeffer, 1982:24). The premise on which both industrial and organisational psychology are based is that "certain psychological processes are shared by individuals in organizations" (Roberts, et al, 1978:28). Thus, it is individual differences,

68 Kabanoff (1985), for example, in an attempt to explain why people who have a desire to cooperate with each other and coordinate their efforts may find themselves in a conflict situation, defines the worker as "a human being who has no relationship to other human beings except for those laid down by the rules of his/her office, and no characteristics other than those prescribed for assigning him/her to the company or given position" (Kabanoff, 1985:115). This type of definition is said to make the analysis easier by taking out all the extraneous variables.

69 As a discipline, organisational psychology is generally located in business schools. Classical industrial psychology, with its roots in the 1900s, has been less normative and descriptive of organisations, and also less experimental in approach. It has traditionally been located in industry or in psychology departments at university (Pfeffer, 1982:24).
rather than specific organisational characteristics, which are deemed to account for varied responses. Though the organisational context has come to be recognised as having a moderating role upon individual responses, “most research examining characteristics of work settings treats individual perceptions of these characteristics as predictors of individual responses rather than as moderators” (Roberts, et al, 1978:29).

Had B.F. Skinner and the behavioural school which he encouraged not had such an influence in twentieth century psychology (Locke, 1977:543-544), there would be no need for a review of this kind to attach much importance to what is, essentially, a fairly typical objectivist view of the individual’s relationship with the environment. However, notwithstanding “post-behaviourist” subjectivist approaches to psychological research (Groeben, 1990:19) Skinner’s behaviourism has played an important role in OB, and OB has taken a prime place in management education in recent years. Therefore, Skinner’s conceptions have influenced managerial thinking and strategy, particularly in relation to organisational change strategies, with his ideology rarely questioned by proponents and advocates of his theories.

According to Skinner, people are very much the products of their environment and science has not yet fully explored the potential of this view. Thus far, Skinner (1989:25) believed, there has only been the beginning of a “science [which is] needed to analyze the complex interactions between the environment and the body and the behavior to which it gives rise” (emphasis added). The basis of Skinner’s “technology of behavior” illustrates this point:

The environment not only prods or lashes, it selects...It is now clear that we must take into account what the environment does to an organism not only before but after it responds. Behavior is shaped and maintained by its consequences. (Skinner, 1972:18, original emphasis).

It is in Skinner’s (1987) essay, *What is Wrong with Daily Life in the Western World?*, that the normative orientation underlying his theory of behaviourism is markedly apparent:
Western cultures have created many opportunities to do things that have pleasing consequences, but they are not the things whose consequences became strengthening.

Here, then, are [two] kinds of cultural practices that have eroded the contingencies of reinforcement under which the process of operant conditioning must have evolved:

1. People work for wages, but most of what they produce does not directly reinforce their behavior. The group profits from a division of labor and from specialization, but workers are alienated from the product of their work. Employers must evoke aversive sanctions.

2. People pay others to produce the things they consume, and thus avoid the aversive side of work, but they lose the reinforcing side as well. So do those who are helped by others when they could help themselves. (Skinner, 1987:25).

An interesting interpretation of Marx's concept of alienation (with a broadside at welfarism), and one which serves as a warning to those who dismiss the role of ideology in social understanding.

Summary: Organisational Behaviour And The Individual

In conclusion, then, the field of organisational behaviour has contributed to an ever-growing field of research which is concerned to understand and illuminate the workings of contemporary organisations. But what has this proliferation of theory effectively achieved in terms of advancing this knowledge? Building on Mayhew's argument that the individualist, rationalist perspective simply concludes that "people do things because they do things" (Mayhew, quoted in Pfeffer, 1982:78), Pfeffer determined that

goal setting theory...argues that people undertake actions to achieve their goals; expectancy theory...argues that people act to attain their highest subjective expected utility...in each instance, there is a circularity present that is troublesome. (Pfeffer, 1982:78).

Although OB has been seen to be concerned with the individual experience of organisations, it has often engaged in a discourse which minimised the impact of sociological forces upon those experiences. Substituting OT's tyranny of structure for varying degrees of psychological determinism and assuming that so long as needs are met desirable
behaviour will follow, has rendered OB's contribution to the analysis of the individual at work incomplete. In order to consider why desirable behaviour frequently does not follow carefully designed management strategy, it is necessary to consider the critical approaches to organisation which are inherent in industrial sociology and the radical perspectives.

Industrial Sociology And The Individual

Industrial Sociology shares some of its roots with OT in the social inquiries of Weber and Durkheim and has evolved a range of methodologies to support and extend its interest in the processes and procedures of modern industrial society. The three main schools of sociological inquiry which have informed industrial sociology are structural-functionalism, Weberianism and Marxism.

Individuals in Roles

Structural-functionalism, as it became, originated with a nineteenth century critique of the individualism of the Enlightenment and the Utilitarians\(^70\) (Lukes, 1973:119). It has bequeathed to industrial sociology an interest in roles\(^71\) and groups of roles, called institutions; with empirical work focusing on the role and institutional interrelationships (Fincham and Rhodes, 1988:10; Homans, 1973:51; Scott, 1959:194). Indeed, sociologists link roles to institutions, not to groups or individuals as in the case of social psychology or industrial/organisational psychologists, respectively (Roberts, et al, 1978:40).

Sociologists have taken the organisation as their unit of analysis in theories about workplace behaviour. Sociologists see organisations as "forms of social collectives with enduring patterns of social interaction" (Roberts, et al, 1978:39).

\(^70\) John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) was greatly influenced by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), but his work, *On Liberty* (1859) was significant to the current discussion in that it concerned itself with the effect of *individuals* upon *society* (Mill, 1971:ch.4) rather than, as in the sociological approaches of later theorists, being concerned with the effects and influence of society on individuals. Yet Mill was aware that the "ways of mankind" were a product of the conduct and values of people, for "it is they who make them what they are" (Mill, 1971:71).

\(^71\) Homans (1973:52) has equated the modern preoccupation with roles with Durkheim's notion of social facts.
Berger (1963:113) argued that roles carried with them "both certain actions and the emotions and attitudes that belong to these actions". Moreover, "even identities that we consider to be our essential selves have been socially assigned" (Berger, 1963:115). Thus, the "patterns of activities studied reflect the structural antecedents of sociologists...and tend to focus on such things as the division of labour, task specialisation and work-flow technology" (Roberts, et al, 1978:40) and reward patterns (Zagorski, 1988:232). These structural antecedents are also apparent in the way emotive concepts are studied: Fox's (1974) 'institutional' approach to trust, which is discussed in succeeding sections, is one example.

A sociology which concerns itself with groups to the exclusion of gaining a fuller understanding of individuals is incomplete according to Dahrendorf who argued for a new unit of analysis, *homo sociologicus*:

> It sounds trivial to require that the elements of sociological analysis be sought in the area where the individual and society intersect....In the group the individual disappears; if the group is taken as the element of analysis, there is no way left for the sociologist to find the individual as a social animal. If, on the other hand - as so often happens to this day - we take as our elementary unit the personality, even the social personality, of the individual, it becomes difficult to account for the fact of society....The problem is to find an elementary category in which both the individual and society can be accommodated. (Dahrendorf, 1968:5-6).

Sociology has been accused of not taking individual differences into account and it has been claimed that its over-reliance on structure and function as determinants of action denies the concept of free will (Coulson and Riddell, 1980:16; Wild, 1985:2-3) and, notwithstanding the acknowledgment afforded by industrial sociology of the role of the individual as a contributory variable for the explanation of collective workplace behaviour, (Bowen, Shaw and Smith, 1974) it has been generally accepted that an individual's range of choices and strategies are limited; "the single most important determinant of organisational power - other things being equal - is location within the organisational hierarchy" (Salaman, 1979:112). To take this perspective further, Berger (1963:92) considered that the type of job one held determined one's place in society and affected the broader social roles which one could expect to
fulfill, considering the more informative behaviour to concentrate on, therefore, was that of the group - when individuals acted collectively.

Thus, although industrial sociologists have acknowledged that work is comprised of both individuals and social structures (Applebaum, 1984:24), they have not really taken account of individuals in their analyses:

*I* Individuals can be viewed as organisms who engage in relatively enduring patterns of responses, but the link between organizations and individuals has not been made in sociological research and theory. Social interaction is assumed to continue unaltered when individual members of the collective leave and others are added. (Roberts, et al, 1978:39).

Therefore, the desirable unit of analysis has been the organisation (Roberts, et al, 1978:30). But the organisational form need not be static. Anderson (1971:30-31), arguing for a “new” sociology, considered that although from birth people within a given culture were socialised into the goals and mores of that culture and were consequently seen to be constrained in their range of alternative decision-choices, most modern people assumed that the institutions and traditions of their society could be changed or overthrown, even though the majority did not feel personally involved in that process.

**Social Interaction: A Complex Process**

Industrial sociology has also been informed by the work of two scholars who have taken a more psychologistic approach to social analysis: Robert Merton and George Herbert Mead. Mead (1936:135) was influenced by both the Anglo-French and German sociological paradigms; seeking to combine the biological models being used in psychology with the concepts of society or social interaction (Mead, 1934:164): “The self, as that which can be an object to itself, is essentially a social structure, and it arises in social experience” (Mead, 1934:140). In holding this view, Mead indicated the prior existence of a society which has an influence upon the

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72 As Fox has noted, the absence of commitment or moral involvement which the manager so often deplores in the lower ranks of the organization is, in considerable measure, a consequence of the low-discretion roles that he and his forerunners have designed for them and for earlier generations of employees who have bequeathed their low expectations and responses to their children. (Fox, 1974:64).
development of the individual mind and self. Yet he also accorded individuals a significant role in shaping that environment:

The basis for this lies in the assumption that there is in the experience which is organized about the individual and the environment as a content of effort in the organism of the individual which is aroused by the pressure of the individual upon the object, and which goes into the object. (Mead, 1938:435).

The social interaction of individuals was seen by Mead to be characterised by underlying forms, and his interest was in explaining those forms:

The process out of which the self arises is a social process which implies the interaction of individuals in the group, implies the pre-existence of the group. It implies also certain co-operative activities in which the different members of the group are involved. It implies, further, that out of this process there may in turn develop a more elaborate organization. (Mead, 1934:164).

Mead's interest, though lay in "small-scale social processes" (Giddens, 1989:695) to the exclusion of the social structures wherein those interactions occur (Giddens, 1989:710).

Merton's theories of social and cultural structure and conflict functionalism influenced Gouldner's notions of functional autonomy and Coser's model of conflict functionalism. Merton (1957:198-199) assumed that norms and values were part of a predefined social context within which social action took place and whose efficacy could be judged by the successful inculcation of "appropriate attitudes and sentiments". He was interested in the manner in which non-conforming behaviour in certain people was the result of pressure from social structures; that is to say, Merton considered both deviant and conforming behaviour products of social structure. "The social structure...produces a strain toward anomie and deviant behavior" (Merton, 1968:211). This is part of the "theoretic orientation of the functional analyst who considers socially deviant behavior just as much a product of social structure as conformist behavior" (Merton, 1968:175, original emphasis). He thus argued against Parsonian determinism and accounted for individual adaptation, which enabled the process of social change to be investigated (Merton,
The existence of reference groups - the comparative frame of reference by which an individual evaluated him or herself - were important components of the social structure, according to Merton (1968:293).

Merton (1968:118) proposed that both manifest and latent functions existed in society, and that examining both could help explain "seemingly irrational social patterns". He believed that social structures such as bureaucracy developed into social constraints upon the choices and behaviour of human beings which altered their patterns of behaviour (Merton, 1957:195). Coser, writing in 1956, was convinced that conflict was one of those behaviour patterns which served a function essential to social survival - groups needed disharmony as well as harmony. "Conflict as well as co-operation has social functions" said Coser (1956:31), acknowledging Simmel's influence73.

Gouldner, in 1959, proposed the notion of functional autonomy. He suggested that the parts of a social system had an interdependent relationship with each other, not just with the whole (Gouldner, 1973:191), and that the "functional autonomy of a part...allows it a degree of refractoriness to the imposition of controls from the system" (Gouldner,1973:212). This refractoriness was possible because the appropriate functioning of bureaucratic rules depended, to a large extent, on the acceptance of their legitimacy by organisational members74; the organisation being, in essence, groups and individuals who were directing their energies towards many ends. The type and degree of legitimacy accorded and the goals toward which people strived were dependent on extra-organisational factors as well as what was happening in the organisation, according to Gouldner's thesis. Gouldner related organisational behaviour to the wider social background which the

73 The German philosopher and sociologist, Georg Simmel, writing in 1908, believed in that there was an underlying pattern and form beneath the individual actions and content of social life and that these could be investigated to reveal similarities of form which underlay the differences in content. He was opposed to the structural sociology of Comte and the German notion that social and historical events were unique, rather than generalisable (Simmel, 1959:313-316). Simmel (1950) also argued that the relationship between individuals and their social world was one of continuous conflict; a dialectic of love-hate; harmony-conflict; attraction and repulsion - a view which influenced Coser's later consideration of the functions of conflict .

74 An observation which recalls Simmel's (1950:122) earlier statement that power could not be exercised by the powerful without the complicity of their subordinates.
individual brought to the employment relationship (Rose, 1975:230): "the personally real does not entirely consist of, or depend upon, collective definitions of social reality, but may also derive from recurrent personal experiences" (Gouldner, 1973:305, emphasis added).

Summary: Industrial Sociology and the Individual
Industrial sociology has thus been seen to have situated the individual within an aggregated framework for analysis, and has focused upon the process by which the social actor interacts within and upon environmental factors in order to incorporate deviant and well as conformist behaviour. Unlike OT, with which it shares some similar roots, industrial sociology has some interest in individuals in organisations - though only to the extent that they are role-occupiers or group members. Industrial sociology also avoids the psychological determinism of OB, by giving considerable emphasis to the sociological factors which influence behaviour in organisations, though the structural-functionalist perspective which underwrites much industrial sociology has been seen to provide an alternative form of determinism. However, behaviours which deviate from organisational norms are not considered pathological in industrial sociology, and the tenor and recurrence of those behaviours is a theme taken up by the next group of theorists, those with a radical perspective. Radical sociological and Marxist theory has asserted that social, and particularly production, relations are not only produced, but reproduced over time.

Radical Perspectives And The Individual
Although radical analyses of the capitalist labour process have generally concentrated on structure and function to the exclusion of the individual experience of work, one radical sociologist in particular, Huw Beynon, has done much to bring the human experience into the structural context of work. Born to Work, a photographic account of working life in British factories, attempted to redress the problem of workers being viewed as "factors of production" with too rarely "a 'public' view of life in factories" (Hedges and Beynon, 1982:7-8), providing images which were inherent in Beynon's earlier account, Working for Ford (1973). In these accounts, Beynon was interested in the labour process - an interest that has been
more broadly generated as a result of Braverman’s (1974) thesis, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, which has enabled Marxist and radical industrial sociologists to develop contemporary applications of Marx’s analysis of the conversion of labour power into productive output. Marx’s view that the commodification of labour in the process of profit generation was central to the capitalist experience of work and underwrote the unnaturalness of it (Marx, 1906:45) has also stimulated the interest of radical sociologists in the concept of work - an activity which has been viewed as being “structured by the patterns of domination generated by the capitalist economic system, by the principles of both the market and reciprocity and by the social hierarchies of age, gender, kinship, neighbourhood and informal group” (Pahl, 1988:749). Marx has arguably had a greater influence than any on the conduct and understanding of industrial experience in the twentieth century, and his ontological perspective is the subject of the following discussion.

**Marx: Individuals as Products of their Economic Environment**

Writing in 1913, Lenin considered Marxist doctrine to be “the legal heir of the best that mankind created in the nineteenth century in the form of German philosophy, English political economy, and French Socialism” (Lenin, quoted in Wiedmann, 1968:122). Moreover, Marxism was “omnipotent because it is true” (Lenin, 1973:59). Marx’s “essential thesis”, according to Althusser (1990:275), was that “ideas, no matter how true and formally proven, can never be historically active in person but only in the form of a mass ideology, adopted in the class struggle”.

Marxism is based on a material analysis of capitalist society; an analysis which concentrates not on the physical properties of matter, but which is concerned with man influencing nature through the work process and therefore producing himself out of nature (Wiedmann, 1968:125).

As human nature is the true common life (Gemeinwesen) of man, men through the activation of

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75 Certainly, Lenin’s view was substantiated by history. Although Marx was virtually left unconsidered by his critics and ideological opponents, his advocates did not challenge Lenin’s interpretation. “Up until recent years”, wrote Althusser in 1978, there had been no critical development of Marxism.

76 With his anti-humanist and anti-evolutionist critique of Marxism, Althusser has been “widely supplanted among progressive intellectuals by one or another species of post-structuralist and ‘post-modernist’ thought” (Elliott, 1990:viii), but has also been credited with de-Stalinising marxism (Elliott, 1990:x-xi).
Dialectics, according to Lenin (1973:60), was “the doctrine of the relativity of human knowledge, which provides us with a reflection of eternally developing matter”. Dialectical materialism, a term invented by Plekhanov to describe Marx and, particularly, Engels, incorporated both an evolutionary view of social change and the “principle of sudden and inevitable leaps, to which gradual change necessarily leads” (Jordan, 1967:189). Guest (1939:11) summarised the value of dialectical materialism as a philosophy which could not only explain the social world, but “actively guide and direct the proletariat in its revolutionary task of changing it” (original emphasis): In this interpretation, Marx’s philosophy is

*materialistic* in the sense that it is based on scientific study of the real world, on an acceptance of this as the basic reality. But at the same time [as it sees] this world in the process of constant revolutionary change, it must be *dialectical*. (Guest, 1939:11, original emphasis).

Marx distinguished between the *person* and the *worker*, stating that it was economic conditions which “had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers” (Marx, 1963a:173). In the Preface to the first edition of *Capital* in 1867, Marx (1906a:15) explained his ontological position:

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77 A fuller discussion of Marxist teleology is included as an endnote at the conclusion of this section.

78 This same perspective is apparent in Marx’s view of history as “the action of men who being divided into economically determined groups and classes represented conflicting social interests and, hence, were the compelling force of change” (Jordan, 1967:89).

79 Marx and Engels both had an “instrumentalist” perception of knowledge in that “they valued theoretical thinking as a means of social reconstruction rather than for its consistency and truth” (Jordan, 1967:xi): “The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it” (Marx, 1968a:35). This perspective was influenced by Marx’s view of philosophy as an “historical phenomenon” in that its content was “subject to the restrictive conditions of its time” (Jordan, 1967:334).

[Philosophers do not grow out of the earth like mushrooms; they are the fruit of their time, of their people...philosophy...becomes the philosophy of the present world. (Marx, 1967a:122).]
Individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class relations and class interests. My standpoint...can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them.

Marx used materialism as a reversal of Hegelian idealism (Marx, 1906b:25). This inversion was apparent in the Marxist view of the social relations of production, that “most difficult of all” concepts, according to Colletti (1973:226).

In production, men not only act on nature but also on one another. They produce only by co-operating in a certain way and mutually exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections and relations does their action on nature, does production, take place. (Marx, 1968b:159).

The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means they find in existence and have to reproduce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life,

A novel understanding of social reality had been proposed by Hegel (1770-1831) in the early part of the nineteenth century, and this view had a stimulating effect on the young Karl Marx. Writing in 1807, Hegel argued that the world of the individual is only to be understood from the individual himself; and the influence of reality upon the individual, a reality which is represented as having a being all its own, receives through this individual absolutely the opposite significance - the individual either lets the stream of reality flowing in upon it have its way, or breaks off and diverts the current of its influence. (Hegel, 1949:335).

Hegel elaborated on what he called his “Phenomenology” in 1816: “In so far...as sensuous external existence is meant by ‘the Real’, Thought has a far higher reality” (Hegel, 1929:99), a view which was eventually challenged by Marx's doctrine of materialism. Although Colletti (1973:27) considered that theoretical Marxists had for “almost a century” misinterpreted Hegel as a materialist, he acknowledged the role Hegel played in the development of Marx's philosophy of dialectical materialism. Marx's concept of the dialectical work process was “borrowed” from Hegel's The Phenomenology of Mind, but where Hegel saw self-awareness as the subject of the dialectical process yet superseded by an awareness of nature, Marx (1967:272) considered that “man is the subject” of the dialectical process, via his/her labour. Marx has been said to have reversed Hegel, who had argued that “philosophy is always and inevitably idealism” (Colletti, 1973:201).
a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production. (Marx and Engels, 1965:31-32, original emphasis).

As Marx (1906:633) said in Capital, capitalist production "produces and reproduces the capitalist relation; on the one side the capitalist, on the other the wage-labourer". Engels explained how the economic mode of production acted upon people to make them slaves of their own domination:

not only the workingman but the classes which indirectly or directly plunder the workingman are also themselves involved in the division of labor and become the slaves of their own tools. The spiritually-barren bourgeois is the slave of his own capital and his own profit-getting, the jurist is dominated by his ossified notions of justice which rule him as a self-contained force; the "refined classes" are dominated by the local limitations and prejudices, by their own physical and spiritual astigmatism, by their specialised education and their lifelong bondage to this specialty, even though the specialty be doing nothing. (Engels, 1907:239).

Behaviour in Organisations: The Labour Process

The economic mode of production in the United States of America as experienced by a man with "a thorough mastery of Marx's pioneering work" (Sweezy, 1974:xi) stimulated the late Harry Braverman to write a treatise destined to have an overwhelming impact on radical scholarship in the latter part of the twentieth century. Labour process theory, a branch of radical sociology whose development was stimulated by the release of Harry Braverman's (1974) thesis, Labor and Monopoly Capital, is the contemporary Marxist doctrine most relevant to a discussion concerned with the behaviour of people in organisations. Labour process theory

demonstrates an interest in, and a theoretical focus on, the design of work, and the role of class factors (dynamics) and relationships in the determination of organization design, technology and organization
structure. It is not, therefore, particularly concerned with informal patterns of relationships. It should be. (Salaman, 1986:113).

Braverman began his discussion by re-examining Marx's theory of labour power in terms of its implications for the employer.

[W]hat the worker sells, and what the capitalist buys, is not an agreed amount of labor, but the power to labor over an agreed period of time. This inability to purchase labor, which is an inalienable bodily and mental function, and the necessity to purchase the power to perform it, is so fraught with consequences for the entire capitalist mode of production that it must be investigated more closely. (Braverman, 1974:54, original emphasis).

What he buys is infinite in potential, but in its realization is limited by the general social conditions under which they work as well as the particular conditions of the enterprise, and by the technical setting of their labor. The work actually performed will be affected by these and many other factors, including the organization of the process and the forms of supervision over it, if any. (Braverman, 1974:57).

For Braverman, the central issue in the labour process was, thus, control - management's control of labour in order to realise the maximum from the potential inherent in labour power. Braverman (1974:139) saw workers as having a "natural resistance" to the capitalist mode of production and he has been criticised for his view of labour's "universal recalcitrance" (Littler and Salaman, 1982:256) which denies the heterogeneity of labour81. As Bray indicated:

Individuals associated with the enterprise are not simply workers or managers or members of the enterprise, but are also members of a wider society. Consequently, when they enter enterprise activities, they bring with them many attitudes and opinions acquired outside of the enterprise itself and these attitudes can affect their behaviour within the enterprise. (Bray, 1986:141).

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81 For example, activists are a special class within the labour movement, and their relationship with capital and other labour is not necessarily the same as that of non-activists (Rollinson, 1991).
Workers' experiences inside organisations, though, also affect their experiences outside (P.K. Edwards, 1990:133)82 - the proletarianisation of labour ensures that this is so by commodifying labour. It was Fox's (1974:181-182) view that labour is viewed as a commodity because our society sets the needs of the market and the maintenance of profit above human needs; an ideology which supports the capitalist labour process. Littler (1978:187) argued that "ideologies [all] have structural implications, but [in Orwellian fashion] some have more than others" (original emphasis); his point being that ideologies should not be contemplated solely in terms of the philosophical viewpoint they represent, but should be analysed with respect to the structures they generate or perpetuate. This view is also evident in Hyman's perspective on the issue of control in the social relations of production:

the worker's labour power cannot be detached from his/her physical presence, and this necessitates an ongoing social relationship with the employer...throughout the labour process itself. Issues of control inevitably pervade this relationship: the conflictual character of job control and the commodity status of labour are reciprocally dependent aspects of social relations of production within capitalism. (Hyman, 1989:21).

Yet although the plight of the worker in the capitalist labour process has motivated much radical research, the worker has not often been accorded primacy as the unit of analysis.83 Braverman (1974:382-384) considered individuals to have become largely regarded by management as replaceable from the reserve army of labour as a result of deskilling, and his own analysis reflects this conception of the worker. Although it has been argued that he intimated subjectivity in the labour process (Wardell,

82 Karasek (1981:84) found that psychologically-demanding work was associated with more active leisure, while workers with little job discretion experienced restricted leisure behaviour. He felt that this had serious implications for democratic societies which relied for the exercise of democracy on popular participation in the democratic process. Workers whose jobs socialised them into not being able to make judgements or not desiring participation and change the face of these societies by being passive, rather than active, citizens (Karasek, 1981:91).

83 Indeed, when the worker has been the focus of the researcher's attention, the researcher has often attracted criticism. P.K. Edwards has been censured for elevating the worker at the expense of concentrating on management strategy. His tendency to "specify workplace industrial relations patterns in terms of worker orientations and action...is both one-sided and misleading", according to Littler, Quinlan and Kitay (1989:507). Yet an over-emphasis on management strategy can detract from the focus which is put on workers' experiences and provide its own analytic limitations.
Braverman has been criticised for failing to take account of individual subjectivity and identity formation within the workplace (Williams, 1992:33). Knights and Willmott (1989:555) suggested power could be "exercised in such a way as to isolate individuals from one another and turn them back in upon themselves" which could lead to "a tendency to become preoccupied with solidifying meaning through the objectification of self in fetishised identities". Williams (1992:34) felt this construction of the worker rendered them too docile and did not take sufficient account of their capacity for resistance, but her criticism did not do justice to the potential inherent in the subjective radical perspective.

The Human Dimension

Although radical scholars, quite rightly, believe it unwise to analyse individual behaviour in isolation from the social relations wherein the behaviour occurs (Pahl, 1988:744), individual subjectivity has an important role in the study of work: particularly when considering consent and legitimation behaviours in relation to change. Habermas (1979:115), for example, considered that the "identity development of the individual" could be used as an analytical tool for understanding "the change of collective identities". Accordingly, in both dimensions identity projections become more and more general and abstract, until finally the projection mechanism as such becomes conscious, and identity formation takes on a reflexive form, in the knowledge that to a certain extent individuals and societies themselves establish their identities. (Habermas, 1979:116).

This subjectivist understanding of capitalist relations has also been invigorated by Marcuse's substantial contribution to radical discourse - a contribution which takes into account the power structures of capitalism and the effects they have on individual consciousness. Marcuse was interested in "false consciousness", in the way in which capitalism created superficial needs in individuals, to the detriment of the development of deeper needs (Marcuse, 1968:7) - needs which were innately human and did not serve an economic system. His analysis was informed by his view of consciousness as:
a general disposition which is common, in various
degrees, to the individual members of one group, class,
society. On these grounds, the distinction between true
and false consciousness becomes meaningful. The
former would synthesize the data of experience in
concepts which reflect, as fully and adequately as possible,
the given society in the given facts. (Marcuse, 1968:208).

Marcuse (1968:3) described modern industrial society as "totalitarian" in
the manner in which it engaged in "economic-technical coordination
which operates through the manipulation of needs by vested interests".
Needs created in this way were "repressive" in that they bound people to
a particular economic mode of production in order to satisfy them: "The
creation of repressive needs has long since become part of socially
necessary labor - necessary in the sense that without it, the established
mode of production could not be sustained" (Marcuse, 1968:246)84. This
gives rise to the false consciousness, about which Marcuse (1968:250-251)
has spoken colourfully and with no small degree of frustration:
"administered individuals...have made their mutilation into their own
liberties and satisfactions...[and] reproduce it on an enlarged scale".

Habermas and Marcuse, though, were concerned with the nature of lived
experience in society and, like Parsons, are primarily social theorists and
not especially concerned with organisational-level experience. Indeed,
the notion of false consciousness was not an adequate explanation of the
behaviour of people in organisations, according to Thompson and
Bannon:

Workers are compelled into acts of resistance while
actively participating in the workings of the capitalist
labour process. Conflict and cooperation are not entirely
separate phenomena, one inherent in capitalist
production, the other externally induced false
consciousness. They are produced, in part by the same
process. The result is a continuum of possible and
overlapping worker responses, from resistance, to

84 Similarly, Fromm (1942:172) has written about the distinction between genuine and
pseudo will:
A great number of our decisions are not really our own but are suggested
to us from the outside; we have succeeded in persuading ourselves that
it is we who have made the decision, whereas we have actually
conformed with expectations of others, driven by the fear of isolation
and by more direct threats to our life, freedom, and comfort.
accommodation on temporary common objectives, to compliance with the greater power of capital, and consent to production practices. (quoted in Thompson, 1990:101-102).

Burawoy (1979:201), too, eschewed what he called the "Marxist psychology" approach to understanding "Marx's view of individuals as merely carrying out the logic of capitalist relations". He was, however, interested in the way individuals were manipulated into consenting to control. In a significant thesis which will be discussed at length in subsequent sections, *Manufacturing Consent* (1979), Burawoy explored the means by which management control systems acted so subversively upon workers' consciousness that they actively participated in "games" which obscured both the workers' inability to recognise their increasing dependence upon the firm and the firm's ability to generate increasingly higher levels of surplus value from the workers' labour. This could all be achieved within the firm, according to Burawoy.

Consent is produced and reproduced on the shop floor and is not dependent on legitimacy drummed into people's heads in schools or on character formation in the family. Even in the marginal situations where imported consciousness does shape behavior, its specific impact is determined by the workers's position in the production process. (Burawoy, 1979:201).

**Summary: Radical Perspectives and the Individual**

Within in the radical discourse it has been seen that there is room for consideration of individual subjectivity. However, the radical perspective of the individual traditionally follows Marx's structural determinism, where the individual is very much the product of the economic superstructures evident in society in particular periods. The more psychologically-based Marxism considered needs and wants to be manufactured by this system, generating a false individual and social consciousness wherein innate human needs are denied at the expense of those created by the structures of domination. The structural determinism of Marxism, though seemingly rigid and unresponsive, has been seen to be mitigated by a strong belief that workers could rise and act to overthrow the forces of their domination. Indeed, in Marx's view, it was the responsibility of philosophy to provide the intellectual tools by
which this could be achieved. Radical perspectives on organisation, which seek to illuminate the processes of domination, strive to achieve this aim. Thus are radical approaches distinguished from the OT and OB perspectives which have contributed to management's ability to control the organisation, or to the control and prediction of human behaviour within organisations; and thus are they an improvement on industrial sociology, which has sought, not to change, but merely to chart, the influence of social structures on individuals.

The Limitations Of The Theoretical Conceptions Of Individuals In Organisations

This thesis argues that each of these approaches are limited in their understanding of the individual experience of work, because they do not account for both the objective and subjective dimensions of the experience. Diagram 2.1 summarises these limitations. It can be seen that each of the perspectives is limited in its ability to account for both the objective and subjective experiences of workers. OT is concerned with objective dimension of the working experience, being interested in individuals only to the extent that they are members of organisational groups which interact to make the overall organisation structure. In this, the approach is indicating its tendency to structural determinism - assuming that if the structure is right, the desired behaviour will follow. OB, although conducting analysis on the subjective dimension of work, generally focuses on this to the exclusion of the larger objective dimension. OB is interested in individuals as organisational members; in this case, as job incumbents. OB has the brief of ensuring that individuals can fit the organisation's values, processes and desired outcomes and analyses in this approach tend to minimise the impact of sociological forces upon individuals. The desire to explain, predict and control human behaviour in organisations has led OB to rely upon a range of psychology-based techniques which are also deterministic; assuming that individual behaviour is determined by psychological characteristics which can be measured and addressed.
Industrial sociology is concerned with the objective dimension of work in organisations. Individuals are seen only as occupiers of roles in organisations which reflect societal norms, values and power structures. Individuals are viewed as social actors who interact both within and upon their social world, exhibiting both deviant and conformist behaviour. Notwithstanding some acknowledgement that individuals can influence social forces, industrial sociology generally exhibits some degree of structural or functional determinism in its analysis. Radical industrial sociology views individuals as workers who are located within particular production relations which replicate class structures in terms of dominance and control. The interest in individuals generally extends to their ability to be part of the collective struggle against these structures. The objective dimension of work is all-important, and the favourable subjective experience is assumed to be one of manufactured compliance.

This thesis argues that these limitations are perpetuated in theoretical perspectives of organisational change, yet it is in times of change that the capacity of individuals to act upon or within this social influence becomes most evident and where an examination of both subjective and objective dimensions will be most illuminating. This review now turns to a discussion of theoretical perspectives of the individual experience of the processes and forces of organisational change to evaluate the strength of these claims.
II. INDIVIDUALS IN ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

The explanations for workers' responses to organisational change have been located within a number of theoretical approaches which inform current organisational analyses. As organisational change, consent and legitimation are all issues which deal with ideologically-based orientations about the respective roles of the parties in the employment relationship, these theoretical perspectives will be clustered into two approaches for the remainder of this review - management theory and critical theory. Whereas earlier it was instructive to establish the common and distinctive antecedents for contemporary analysis, it is
more helpful at this stage to group theory in terms of its ability to question the roles of the parties in the labour process.

As has been shown, the roots of much contemporary organisational analysis lay in the nineteenth century, when theorists were attempting to understand and explain the effects of capitalism and capitalist industrialism. At the same time, social inquiry was complemented by a widespread interest in science (Parker, et al, 1981:12) and a belief that social progress and scientific progress were related. While early theory attempted to make sense of the (then) new ways of work, it is in more recent times that the theme of organisational change has emerged as a characteristic of great importance.85 Fox's comment, written in 1974, appears to capture the fundamental character of the current approach of management theory to organisational change:

[S]uch conscious efforts as we are now witnessing towards reversing or modifying the Scientific Management approach are inspired by the same motivations as led to its adoption - namely economic efficiency, growth, or profit. High-trust relations are pursued, not for their own sake, but because they are thought to evoke commitment to managerial ends, improve performance, promote adaptability and receptivity to change, stabilize the labour force. (Fox, 1974:363).

Management Theory And Organisational Change

Following Fox's critique, it is argued here that the labour management aspect of change essentially seeks to effect two things - that workers both legitimate the change, that is to say, they see the change as being necessary and useful; and that workers consent to the change, or cooperate in the

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85 Contemporary research has principally lain with management theorists, who have sought to understand the structural and environmental variables which influence an organisation's "rational" response to internal and external exigencies. Where critical theorists have concerned themselves with organisational change, it has tended to be on either a case-specific basis or in terms of analysing management's strategies to control the processes of change and/or workers' collective acts of resistance. This section will thus principally present management perspectives on organisational change, reflecting the relative research imperatives of the two broad perspectives.

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various stages of its implementation. Rarely will management theory presume that workers will actively cooperate with, or consent to, all stages of the change process. Some resistance to the change will be expected, and there are considerable explanations offered as to why those resistances might occur. However, management’s right to make changes will not be questioned, even by the more pluralist orientations to labour management, and the change will thus be considered legitimate by theorists. If the mooted changes are built on ‘sound’ business decisions, then management theory will only be concerned with the correct delivery of the reasons for the change, and will not admit that workers might think the changes themselves irrational. That workers should judge organisational decisions as non-rational is not generally admitted as a possibility, any more than workers having rational goals which may direct their efforts away from organisational goals.

The obligation of workers is to obey commands which are in the organisation’s best interest, according to Barnard (1987:98). Therefore, in times of crisis or stress, not to obey is tantamount to an expression of hostility towards the organisation, and one which should be punished. Thus, in the context of organisational change, when management is charting a course consistent to adapting to changing circumstances, it has the legitimate right to have its orders and directions complied with by workers:

> It is the sense of the justification which lies in the obvious situation which regulates the exercise of the veto by the final authority which lies at the bottom. (Barnard, 1987:98).

**Structural Approaches to Change**

This observation by Barnard underscored a number of approaches to the role given to workers in organisational change. In OT, the study of organisational change is approached by investigating, firstly, “the antecedents or consequences of changes in organizational forms or administrative practices” and, secondly, the ways in which organisational changes “emerge, develop, grow or terminate over time” (Vanden Ven...
and Huber, 1990:213). The investigations associated with examining these questions have generally dealt with product or business strategy and environment issues, rather than the behavioural dynamics of organisational change. OT approaches to organisational change, reflecting the structural determinism in their ontological perspective, have tended to concentrate on the analysis of change to organisational structure. Why do organisational structures change over time? What relationship does structure have to the firm's operating environment? How is this structure informed by societal structures, values and mores? In what way is the culture of the organisation affected by changes to culture, and how does organisational culture, in turn, affect changes to structure?

Aldrich (1992) described three approaches to analysing organisational change: the ecological, institutional and interpretive approaches. The ecological and institutional approaches eschewed individuals as units of analysis, neglecting the role of internal agency and interest in constructing and maintaining organisational structures (Aldrich, 1992:26), focusing on "strategic initiatives rather than individuals" (Burgelman, 1991:240). The interpretive approach to organisational change comes closer to gaining an understanding of people in organisations, and has "had a substantial influence on contemporary organization theory and research" (Jermier, Slocum, Fry and James, 1991:170). Interpretivists have argued that a fuller understanding of the conditions under which such discontinuities occur requires an interpretive account of social action....focus[ing] on an actor's perspective on life in organizations...stress[ing] that organizational members must take into account the constraints of their social and physical environments. (Aldrich, 1992:23).

The three sub-strands of Interpretist approaches range from the cognitive to the behavioural cultural to the materialist cultural, the latter group emphasising the role of power and privilege on organisational culture. An interest in cultural change in organisations has motivated theorists to categorise organisations according to particular cultural types, whose culture then affects the type of responses to, and processes of, organisational change. To understand organisational change, then, the
Interpretist must understand how organisational members perceive the change - a focus which highlights the Interpretist belief that organisations “do not operate solely on the basis of a rational economic order” (Aldrich, 1992:23-25). Although interpretists have come closer to an understanding of agency, it should be noted that their interest in organisational actors has extended only to their membership of social categories, and not to their experience as individuals in organisations (Aldrich, 1992:39).87 By definition, then, organisation theory is only interested in individuals to the extent that they are members of particular groups.

The limitations associated with this neglect of individuals is reflected in the ‘broad brush’ approach which has shown itself to be problematic in organisational research. Sköldberg (1994), in an attempt to analyse organisational change in the Swedish public sector, noted one of the major problems of OT analysis - that empirical data did not fall into any of the standard theory boxes. The changes made were “characterised by inconsistencies” (Sköldberg, 1994:220).

Workers React to Change

Generally, management theorists have identified overcoming worker resistance to change as an inevitable task in the change process. Frederick Winslow Taylor, the father of scientific management, was one of the early proponents of this attitude, illustrating that the expected role of workers in change involved some degree of resistance: “[Working men] do not ask the object of the change, but oppose it simply as change” (Taylor, 1911:137, original emphasis). The resistance expected from workers led Taylor to suggest that the pace of change be slow, but Taylor was firm in his belief that workers should be left in no doubt as to their position in the change process - they were to implement the changes proposed by the planning department and, although the pace of change would be geared to the human frailties associated with changing situations, its eventual implementation would not:

The worst mistake that can be made is to refer to any part of the system as being ‘on trial’. Once a given step is

87 Though this limitation has recently begun to be redressed to incorporate psychological, sociological and organisational behaviour research (Staw, Sutton and Pelled, 1994:51) to gain a better understanding of how workers interact with organisations; or to incorporate models of management cognitive schema to understand how shared meanings could express themselves in coercive organisational politics (Voyer, 1994:72-84).
decided on, all parties must be made to understand that it will go whether any one around the place likes it or not. (Taylor, 1911:136).

Arguably, this remains the bottom line in approaching organisational change from a management perspective. Regardless of the model for introducing change, its eventual implementation within predetermined limits is assumed. This gives workers the role of 'reactors', in the sense that they react to management initiatives. Roethlisberger and Dickson (1941:557) in the Hawthorne studies found, for example, that the "introduction of a technical change may involve for an individual or group of individuals the loss of certain prestige symbols and, as a result, have a demoralizing effect". The Human Relations strategies, though, which were based upon these types of observations, have been criticised as "pseudo-assertions of humanness...pseudo because 'human' needs were referred to only as long as they did not interfere with instrumental efficiency and productivity" (Hill, 1988a:271). Mayo's research, for example, was "conducted to help management solve its problems" (Coser, 1956:24).

Mayo (1987) noted the impact of consistent change on individuals and organisations - both of whom had to be "adaptive" with little continuity available to the individual worker as production methods, and therefore group affiliations, changed (Mayo, 1987:84). This situation posed problems for organisational objectives of adaptation and responsiveness:

\[T\]he age-old human desire for persistence of human association will seriously complicate the development of an adaptive society if we cannot devise systematic methods of easing individuals from one group of associates into another. (Mayo, 1987:87).

Thus, the role of the individual in change was contaminated by the individual's desire to act within the parameters of the group and, according to Mayo, management never dealt with individuals - only with groups - because groups had such an influence on individual attitudes
and practices that their presence could be felt even in one-to-one situations (Mayo, 1987:87).88

Achieving "Fit"

While OB considers modern change strategies to be democratic and with a humanistic focus, it also declares organisational change as involving modification of "selection and socialization processes to hire and support individuals who will espouse the new values" (Robbins, 1992:290), with the final objective being to optimise "the fit between organizational elements" (Mitchell, Dowling, Kabanoff and Larson, 1992:545). Thus, there are two main goals in planned change89: "the ability of the organization to adapt to changes in its environment...[and the ability] to change worker behavior". Changes in worker behaviour are deemed necessary to a change program because the success or otherwise of the organisation is seen to be directly linked to worker behaviour (Robbins, 1992:276). Robbins, in a recent survey of "people-focused interventions" for achieving change, identified a number of techniques managers could use to facilitate the introduction and implementation of organisational change - all of which fall within the guidelines of achieving a good fit between the individual and the organisation or heightening individual commitment to organisational goals. These contemporary strategies all have their origins in the work of Kurt Lewin90 and the early human relationists.

88 Human relations strategies have also been used to win employee loyalty away from another source of group affiliation - the union - as illustrated in a case study from an Australian light-engineering firm:

The objective of management...is to win acceptance that they are better able than the trade unions to look after the interests of employees. Management-initiated job enrichment and employee participation schemes and consultative committees involving employees (rather than what management sees as unrepresentative shop stewards) have been introduced in attempts to build 'team spirit' and 'loyalty'. (Lumley, 1991:390).

89 Planned change is generally dealt with by the field of Organisational Development, which "uses the theories and knowledge of the behavioural sciences to produce change in organizations" (Aguinis, 1994:417). Given that the field is mainly concerned with management strategies to effect change, it falls within the original assumption made in this section - that management seeks to control the change process. The burgeoning literature in this field will not be reviewed here, but the interested reader is referred to any of the many texts in the area.

90 Lewin's influence is evident not only in practice but in theoretical orientation:

The specific theoretical constructs that Lewin introduced are not often used in current social-psychological theorizing, but the general orientation that he espoused is very much in evidence. The belief that social-psychological phenomena can be studied experimentally, that
The Hawthorne studies, flawed though they have since been shown to be, did illustrate the nature of workplace experience as being part of a range of human experience. Workers' "personal situation and attitude" (Mayo, 1987:85) became important variables in understanding performance at work. The implication of this knowledge, however, was that the organisation should afford workers the opportunity to talk things through with trained personnel, in a sympathetic and open manner, in order that they could overcome irrational and emotional resistances to the adaptations required of them. More recent management theorists have explored the effect of organisational life on workers to determine whether these "irrational" fears and resistances evolve from their experiences at work. One of the difficulties for management in planning organisational change has been seen to be the uncertainty associated with its smooth implementation, and the role of workers has been difficult to chart given that people may act in a manner contrary to espoused beliefs, values and attitudes (Argyris, 1992:463). Argyris (1992:463-465) believed that people tended to reason in a manner which increased the likelihood of negative outcomes (such as competitiveness instead of cooperation; mistrust in place of trust; and obedience rather than "informed dissent") as a result of socialisation processes throughout their public life. He argued that workers utilised learning systems which, while designed to protect the individual, led them to behaviour which thwarted better ways of reasoning which would enhance performance towards achieving desirable outcomes for the organisation. Moreover, individuals, groups and organisations were unaware of the faulty reasoning which had led to these "counter-productive consequences". Argyris considered that workers had a role to play in the change process in so far as they should learn by changing their own assumptions and beliefs - being proactive in change, not just reactive. The challenge for management, according to this view, would appear to be in creating an organisational climate wherein workers would come to their own decisions, which were simultaneously congruent with the objectives of the organisation. This task was made easier, according to management theory, if the worker selection process was well planned and executed.

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psychological events must be studied in relation to one another, that both the individual and the group are important - these ideas are part of the Lewinian legacy and continue to influence both theory and research. (Deaux, 1988:9).
Workers Proactive in Change
Latterly, organisational behaviourists have recognised three responses available to workers in the change process: workers can be passive, being manipulated by management strategies; they can be a negative force which resists the change; or they can be change agents who actively promote change (Robbins, 1992). This last response indicates an awareness by management theorists that workers can be proactive in workplace change. However, it is also considered important that motivation for organisational change needs to be generated among workers (Mitchell, et al, 1992) and it has been widely recognised that worker cooperation is needed for effective change to be implemented, and for a healthy and productive workforce both during and after the change process (Ashford, 1988:33).

According to social psychologists, the person within the organisation is attributed an identity consistent with the job role s/he is expected to perform, an identity separate from his/her personality as an individual, non-work being (Bowles, 1990:396). Within this framework, people both make efforts to adjust their environment to suit their needs and adjust their own needs to suit their environment (Eaton, 1986). The proactive role in change which is played by many workers is recognised in research dealing with industrial democracy issues, where technical and organisational change are assumed to be processes where “several actors, each with their own interests, can contribute to the future shape of the workplace” (Levie and Sandberg, 1991:231-232); though the “actors” referred to are generally collectivities of management and employees. Where they are viewed as proactive, or desire to be proactive, the roles workers are expected to play in the process are to provide information about problems with current systems (Mitchell, et al, 1992) and to

91 Coch and French (1948:516), early advocates of Lewinian theory, found that resistance to change, superficially at least, appeared to be a motivational problem.

92 Lewin (1947), using a force field analogy to investigate constancy towards the status quo and resistance to change, found that the forces “always depend on the characteristics of the group or individual in question and on his relation to the surroundings” (Lewin, 1947:23).

93 This is not always the case, though. Sears (1988:328) has expressed concern at the increasingly individualist research currently being undertaken in social psychology: “social psychologists’ accounts of attitude change today generally ignore the role of groups in attitudinal processes...The image of the human being is of a socially isolated, atomized individual - an odd portrayal by a ‘social’ psychology”.

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cooperate in the implementation of planned change (Argyris, 1983; Walton, 1992).94

Critical Theory And Organisational Change

Class-based Exploitation

Marx showed that capitalism was characterised by its constantly revolutionising the means of production (Engels, 1906:31; Marx, 1906:416). Change, then, was integral to the capitalist labour process and workers were continuously subjected to innovative production strategies as capitalists sought to improve their surplus value (Marx, 1906:218-219). Workers, for Marx, were thus victims of the continuous revolutionising of the production - fettered by their inevitable participation in the capitalist labour process (Marx and Engels, 1972:341). Marx did not consider workers to be helpless victims, though. Through their collective action and political consciousness, workers could and would rise to overthrow the shackles into which they had been cast by the bourgeois epoch.

For Marx was above all a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute...to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and needs, conscious of its emancipation. (Engels, 1972:604).

In his eulogy to Marx upon his death, Engels captured the essence of Marx's dialectical materialism. That, although the products of their economic mode of existence, workers could be made aware of their position as members of a class and, as a class, revolt. In discussing the nature of the class experience (which was not developed by Marx due to

94 This is illustrated by the experience at Volvo, in Sweden. Because of the centralised wage control in that country, Volvo was not able to offer wage increases as an attractor to employees and as a method for reducing turnover. Pontusson (1990:328-332) argued that Fordist mass producers need this type of wage flexibility to hold workers in the boring and distasteful jobs associated with that type of production. What Volvo had to do, given the wage constraint, was to 'humanize' the work in order to decrease turnover and absenteeism. Thus, the management imperative was translated into job enrichment, enlargement and rotation schemes which developed after the establishment of the Kalmar plant in the early 1970s, and in which management and trade union interests were congruent.
his death) in *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx located the two main classes in society (bourgeois and proletariat) according to their ownership of the means of production. Workers could resist as individuals against the bourgeois control of the means of production in the early days of manufacture "not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves" (Marx and Engels, 1972:342). This individual action soon became collective action as the arrangement of production changed to more collective forms.

It was in the development of a class consciousness as workers realised the same character of their local struggles that the seeds of revolution were borne (Marx and Engels, 1972:341-345). The development of a political, class consciousness, was therefore essential to liberation of the proletariat.

Resistance within the workplace alone was not enough to overcome the power of the state, whose institutions were the creatures of capitalism. To Marx, then, the individual struggle at the workplace could not provide the clarity of analysis needed to survey the trends of a rising political consciousness among the masses.

**Deskilling**

Marx (1906:421) believed that capitalism, in its most refined form, objectified the production process: "Modern Industry has a productive organism that is purely objective, in which the labourer becomes a mere appendage to an already existing material condition of production." Part of that process of objectification, an ever-increasing division of labour, served as a strategy which subjugated the control which craft workers held over the production process. It was this "deskilling" of the labour process which provided Braverman's fundamental critique of managerial control, and which has subsequently stimulated radical debate.

Braverman, as noted earlier, did not consider the subjectivity of labour in the production process and excellent criticisms of this neglect are available in Thompson (1989) and P.K. Edwards (1986) and will not be repeated here. However, it is instructive to note that Braverman (1974:ch.9), while not directly addressing the issue of worker resistance to the increasing division of labour, saw the reunification of conception and execution - the diminution of the division of labour to a return to "whole jobs" - as the only means by which labour can regain control over the labour process. This will not happen within the capitalist labour process.
Manipulation

Organisational and technical structures and processes are not value-free or inevitable according to critical perspectives (Braverman, 1974; Bramble, 1989a; Edwards, 1979; Friedman, 1990; and others). Michael Burawoy's thesis on the production and reproduction of worker consent to management control of the labour process stimulated an interest in why workers did not resist more often. In Burawoy's (1979) thesis, workers remained the victims of management control of the labour process, but he explored how workers contributed to their own downfall through actively consenting, via attitude and behaviours, to achieving outcomes congruent with managerial objectives. The subjective orientation to work was seen by Burawoy to be generated at the point of production, principally through the existence of an internal labour market in which "the interests of the worker are constituted as those of one individual against other individuals rather than those of one class opposed to another class" (Burawoy, 1979:107). This was complemented by the development of an internal state whereby workers and management had rights and obligations - a type of organisational citizenship (Burawoy, 1979:116-120). The hegemony which resulted from these organisational structures led Burawoy (1979:201-203) to conclude that shopfloor activities had a high level of autonomy which could be accounted for by "the organization of the labour process, the internal state and the internal labor market". He saw few means for workers to resist this hegemony and the burden of the overthrow of capitalism devolved to the Third World and "possibly some European countries" where socialism was still "on the agenda". Thus, Burawoy allowed for individual responses to the capitalist labour process to enrich his analysis and incorporate some of the complexity of the shopfloor's reaction to technological and organisational change, but he did not consider workers able to effectively resist within the capitalist labour process; nor did he consider that the workers might have some "real" interests which might be met by those production relations (P.K. Edwards, 1986; Thompson, 1989).

Thus, the radical approaches to organisational change have all categorised the worker, though not always helpless, as victims of management's revolutionising the means of production in order to gain ever more control over its social relations. However, there is another critical perspective on workplace relations which is important to consider in
relation to the role of the individual in organisational change which may allow an extra dimension of the workplace experience to emerge.

**Relative Autonomy**

P.K. Edwards, in 1986, proposed what he termed a "materialist", non-Marxist analysis of work relations. In this, he attempted to incorporate the resistance which Burawoy had neglected in his discussion of hegemony. He also addressed ways in which workers might genuinely gain from their association with capital. In many ways, P.K. Edwards was charting a new frontier in the study of the labour process, which was soundly the province of Marxist scholars. P.K. Edwards (1986:280) was interested in the relative autonomy of "patterns of work relations", arguing that it was not the case that workers would simply not work if managerial control mechanisms were somehow removed. Workers have general expectations about the duty to work which are derived from experiences in home and school as well as work. What systems of control do is to define and specify the general duty according to the needs of the particular employer. Workers have varying abilities to alter managerial rules. According to the interaction between such struggle at the point of production and demands derived from the process of exchange, for example pressures stemming from rising international competition, a particular pattern of control develops.

P.K. Edwards was interested in both individual and collective workplace responses to production relations, and the subjective and objective features of work. As indicated above, he believed workers had a role in shaping the effort bargain (1986:56) and that research should seek to develop indicators which would illuminate the exact nature of work relations (1986:324). Although his interest was principally concerned with developing an adequate theory of workplace conflict, P.K Edwards' approach is also germane to a consideration of workplace change. In organisational change, too, it is instructive to understand how the general mode of production, the organisation of the labour process and its "concrete operation" in the real world interact to provide production relations which are simultaneously antagonistic and cooperative (1986:60-95).

Alan Fox (1990), some years earlier, had faced similar difficulties. Drawn to the "truth" of Marx's analysis of the social relations of production, Fox was unable to agree with Marxism's prescriptive content.
His materialist analysis assumed that these external and internal structures were shaped by the behaviour of actors, that there was an interaction between these factors at the shopfloor (1986:280-281) and that the struggles generated in this interaction developed a "logic of their own" (1986:318) as personal abilities, luck and intended and unintended consequences all contributed to the character of the work relationship (1986:280). In short, there was a lot happening at the shopfloor level and management should not be assumed to have the control of labour as their central objective (P.K. Edwards, 1986; Thompson, 1989).

The Limitations of the Theoretical Approaches To Organisational Change

At the bottom line, although there are understandable reasons for resistance to change arising from job and employment security and various psychological threats (Argyris, 1992; Ellis, 1992), management theorists have generally assumed legitimacy in management's right to initiate and control organisational change. Organisation theory has only recently incorporated the role of workers in change via the interpretivist perspective; the majority of work coming from organisational behaviour and social psychology, both of which have their roots in Lewin and the early human relationists. All these perspectives, though, provide a very limited understanding of the individual in organisational change. Workers were generally seen as components of an organisational change strategy: providing the cultural environment; reacting to management initiatives; being proactive, or just elements which had to fit in. The task of management was to ensure workers could fit within the evolving organisation. These assumptions, limitations and the strategies to which they gave rise are represented in Diagram 2.2 (over).

Unlike management theory, which did not question management's right to initiate and control organisational change, critical theory has argued that managerial prerogative is an outdated notion; anything that happens at work is an issue of concern to workers, who have the right to be both concerned about and involved in the process of change (for example, Anderson, 1991). Critical perspectives on organisational change did not accept management's right to initiate and control the change process as legitimate, and examined the mechanisms and source of that control, believing change to be fundamental to capitalist production. However, the role of the individual in change was neglected and thus, though the
The objective dimension of the experience of workplace change was explored, the subjective dimension was underdeveloped.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORKERS AS COMPONENTS OF CHANGE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL SOURCE</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS AND STRATEGY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers components of organisational culture.</td>
<td>OT - Interpretivist</td>
<td>Interest in individuals only as members of organisational groups which interact to make the overall organisation culture. STRATEGY: Understand the culture, then design appropriate change strategies to “fit”. ASSUMES: It is possible to a) Assess an organisation’s culture; b) manipulate acceptance of change by appealing to worker’s beliefs/values. A mix of structural/psychological determinism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers as reactors to change.</td>
<td>Taylorism, Human Relations, Organisational Behaviour.</td>
<td>Views individuals only as reactors to change, usually as resistors who are influenced by organisational groups. STRATEGY: Educate workers about the benefits/necessity of change; sympathise and counsel those “suffering” from resistance; target groups to effect more rapid change through group dynamics. Get rid of workers who don’t respond positively over time. ASSUMES: That, if workers’ irrational fears and uncertainties are laid to rest, they will be able to see that change will benefit both them and the organisation. A mix of structural/psychological determinism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers as elements of fit.</td>
<td>Organisational Behaviour</td>
<td>Interest in individuals extends only to the extent that they “fit” the organisation’s values, processes and desired outcomes. STRATEGY: Human resource management techniques to improve selection and socialisation processes. Select out individuals who are not likely to fit. After successful selection, use socialisation strategies to increase congruence with organisational goals. ASSUMES: Psychological determinism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers as active participants in change.</td>
<td>Organisational Behaviour, Neo Human Relations.</td>
<td>Interest in individual motivations only to the extent of their congruence with organisational goals. STRATEGY: Motivate workers to cooperate with change. Create an appropriate organisational climate for self-motivated workers to flourish. ASSUMES: Possible to identify what motivates workers and supply it. Psychological determinism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 2.2: Management Theory And The Role Of Individuals In Change
In the radical perspectives of Marx and Braverman, individuals were irrelevant to the analysis, as the focus for workers' resistance to the continuous revolutionising of the production process lay in the workers' collective action. Burawoy developed a theory of individual incorporation in the capitalist labour process, but was interested in hegemonic devices rather than the worker's ability to resist management control. These views are summarised in Diagram 2.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORKERS AS VICTIMS OF CHANGE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL SOURCE</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS AND STRATEGY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers as class victims.</td>
<td>Marx</td>
<td>Not interested in individuals. Concerned with workers' capacity to resist at the collective level only. STRATEGY: Collective action to overthrow the forces of capitalist subjugation and appropriate the means of economic, and hence, political power. ASSUMES: Individuals are products of the economic mode of production extant in their society. Structural determinism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers as deskilled victims.</td>
<td>Braverman via Marx</td>
<td>Not interested in individuals. Concerned with the objective features of work. STRATEGY: A return to &quot;whole&quot; work necessary to effect worker control of the labour process. ASSUMES: The objective features of work are fundamental to the understanding of the capitalist labour process. All organisational and technological change leads to deskilling. Structural determinism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers as manipulated victims - participating in their own subjugation.</td>
<td>Burawoy via Marx</td>
<td>Interested in the subjective features of work and individual responses to the capitalist labour process. STRATEGY: Rely on Third World to develop revolutionary socialism. ASSUMES: All consent is &quot;manufactured&quot; - that the worker has nothing &quot;real&quot; to gain from participating in the capitalist labour process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P.K. Edwards proposed a materialist analysis of work relations to illuminate the character of shopfloor conflict by incorporating both the individual and cooperation with management, but it was earlier argued that his method could as well be applied to a consideration of organisational change. The materialist approach is summarised in
Diagram 2.4 (over). It has the benefit of being able to account for both objective and subjective features of the experience of work, and does so within a critical framework of analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORKERS AS RELATIVELY AUTONOMOUS ACTORS IN CHANGE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL SOURCE</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS AND STRATEGY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers as relatively autonomous actors in change.</td>
<td>P.K. Edwards</td>
<td>Interested in individual and collective responses. Interested in objective and subjective features of work. STRATEGY: A greater understanding of the forces at work in the social relations of production will enable more realistic analysis of why particular types of workplace responses emerge. ASSUMES:Workers have a role in shaping the effort bargain. Capitalism does have something to offer to some workers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 2.4: A Materialist View Of The Role Of Individuals In Change

With the exception of P.K Edwards' materialist approach, the major critical theorists have tended to focus either on the role of management or collectivities. In countries such as Britain and Australia where management and unions have been intimately involved in the negotiations associated with organisational change strategies, this focus has been appropriate and illuminating. However, as more individualistic strategies are being pursued by management, it is in the interest of contemporary critical discourse to encourage a more decentralised focus of analysis. The change associated with the introduction of these strategies and the responses they might elicit cannot be fully appreciated unless an understanding of the processes of consent and legitimation is developed, and it is to the concept of consent that consideration will now be given.
III. THE PROBLEM OF WORKER CONSENT

Worker consent is a 'problem' essentially because the simple act of employing someone does not guarantee that their labour will be converted into productive output. Marx (1972:169) understood this, and explained that what workers "sell to the capitalist for money is their labour power" (original emphasis). In order to achieve the desired productivity from workers, then, capital must coerce or cajole them into activities which are in accordance with organisational requirements. This is "the problem of management" (Couchman, 1990:36). Management theory has assumed two contradictory notions in regard to the management of the labour process: "the assumption of underlying harmony and the necessity of social control" (Burawoy, 1979:7, original emphasis).

Taken together, these premises appear contradictory; for if there is underlying harmony and consensus is not problematical, then why is social control important or necessary? And, conversely, if social control is so important, then how can we take consensus as given? (Burawoy, 1979:7-8).

Burawoy (1979:8) proposed that each theoretical assumption had arisen from a different sociological source, and that there was little congress between the two perspectives; preventing each from enlightening the other. It can be argued, though, that the distinction is not so clear cut - as management theory is equal to the task of merging the two assumptions by the addition of a third: that harmony is the natural state, it is available to organisations so long as they do things properly, and lack of consensus is merely an indication that you are getting it wrong, rather than arising from any deeper cause. There would be harmony if the right workers were recruited in the first instance; if the socialisation processes were attuned to organisational requirements; if management were better educated and could get the best from people; if unions would just stop interfering in the relationship between employer and employee...

All these reasons, and the many more which could be brought to bear, ignore the inherent power differential between labour and capital which makes the relationship so fundamentally antagonistic. However, the
employment relationship is not a completely antagonistic one, and the purpose of the remainder of this review is to consider how a working relationship can develop between management and workers which enables productive output to be accomplished. Consent is discussed in the present section, but its adjunct, legitimation, must also play a part; the concepts are not as separate as a succinct definition would suggest.

Defining Consent?

In Chapter One, consent was defined as the recognition of institutionalised rules (Mahnkopf, 1986:47) but the concept of consent does not stop at simply the recognition of institutionalised rules in most theoretical perspectives; it incorporates the notion of cooperation with those rules and, specifically, with the organisational objectives whose attainment is facilitated by the rules. It will be seen during the course of the review that some active participation of this sort is associated with the notion of consent in all theoretical approaches, but this does not mean that consent need be equated with total surrender to management control.

In a random telephone survey of 371 employed adults in the US Midwest, Hodson, Creighton, Jamison, Rieble and Welsh (1994) found that consent was influenced by worker characteristics such as perceptions of job autonomy and levels of job-related participation; gender; tenure; education; and trade union membership and participation in strikes. Other variables which were found to have influenced consent were related to the characteristics of the work process, including freedom of movement and the discretion of work scheduling this implied; whether work was dirty, hard or physically demanding; organisational size; promotion opportunities; core or peripheral location in the internal labour market; and the existence of an internal state and bureaucratic rules (Hodson, et al, 1994:898-899). These results led the research team to conclude that worker consent should be conceptualised as a hierarchical process in which autonomy and participation, as well as other workplace factors, lead to solidarity and through solidarity to a concern with organizational justice and injustice. (Hodson, et al, 1994:897).
Participation and worker autonomy were therefore key variables in understanding the nature of worker consent, according to this definition. Regardless of whether one wishes to accept the conclusions drawn by Hodson, et al., it is important to note their conceptualisation of consent as a process. This is a theoretically important point because it implies some notion that consent is fluid, that it is not inevitable in the employment relationship and that once given, it may be retracted. Hodson, et al., incorporated a socio-technical perspective which was prepared to admit that gaining worker consent could be problematic, but management perspectives have generally taken as given that management prerogative includes the expectation of worker consent to that control; uncooperative behaviour being largely regarded in theory as pathological. The review will now turn to a consideration of the way consent is regarded by management theory. It will be seen that consent, as such, is not directly addressed. This thesis proposes that it is the process of cooperation which captures the managerial approach to the notion of consent.

Management Theory And Worker Consent

Mahnkopf’s definition related consent to institutionalised rules. The rules of an organisation generally reflect its objectives, and management theory is concerned with the attainment of organisational objectives. This interest directs the way consenting behaviours and attitudes are dealt with in management theory, and it is proposed here that management theory approximates the notion of consent in its consideration of workers’ cooperation with organisational objectives. It will be recalled that Mayo believed that group norms and values were important determinants of behaviour at work, and he felt these norms and values had a role to play in providing the basis for workforce cooperation with management’s objectives. Mayo (1987:79) thought obtaining “sustained cooperation” was one of management’s “persistent problems” and it was management’s duty to provide an environment

96 Hodson, et al., were specifically interested in the role of participation in engendering consent and the effect this had on worker solidarity and unity.
97 This is in spite of declarations similar to Kramer’s (1975:47) argument that the philosophical premise upon which the practice of management is based is that life is conflictual and the task of management is “harmonizing conflicts that arise inside and outside of the enterprise rather than aggravating them”.

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wherein the cooperative effort could be engendered: if conditions were right, workers would be able to perform their tasks in a fully cooperative manner - free from "coercion from above or limitation from below" (Mayo, 1987:81). The cooperative state was the norm, the state which allowed the full expression of human endeavour which was denied by bad management or bad conditions, which led to an imposition of other, unhealthy norms. Even 'industrial engineers' have elaborated on the necessity of gaining worker cooperation with management initiatives - though their prescriptions for obtaining this cooperation differed. Taylor was cognisant of the vast changes in attitude necessary to the adoption of scientific management principles:

Scientific management does not exist and cannot exist until there has been a complete mental revolution on the part of the workmen working under it, as to their duties toward themselves and toward their employers. (Taylor, 1911:130).

Likewise, a similar revolution in thought was needed on the part of management as it was assumed that management had the obligation to ensure workers knew how to work in the new way (Taylor, 1987:45). This indicated Taylor's (1987:39) understanding of the need for management to foster the goodwill of workers, but also showed his belief that workers would be cooperative with the new and better ways of working provided they were properly educated about them; that the changes were made in a "logical sequence" and that they were adequately remunerated for their efforts - for "merely talking" though worthwhile, did not provide the concrete "object lesson" required to change their behaviour (Taylor, 1911:61).

The link between motivation and worker cooperation was identified by early management writers: Henri Fayol noted, in 1916, that the "art of handling men is apparent from the keenness of subordinates" (Fayol, 1987:28). A practising manager, Fayol recognised the importance of directing and obtaining workers' efforts towards organisational goals. This was echoed by an early British writer, Oliver Sheldon. Having spent the greater part of his working life as a senior manager for the Quaker firm, Rowntree and Company, Sheldon (1987:69) considered one of the important functions of management to be the "promotion of cooperation between all engaged in production". Indeed, the ability of management
to obtain the cooperation of workers - to “organize all the forces there are in an enterprise and make them serve a common purpose” was the preeminent leadership quality, according to Mary Parker Follett in 1933. A theoretician with views on organisational behaviour which predated many modern management trends, Follett (1987:56) held that workers had expertise which could be beneficial to the organisation, and available to it if management put the time into educating workers as to their responsibilities toward the firm. The fact that good leadership qualities were required to effect this process indicated a general awareness that the working environment did not naturally engender a cooperative effort, even if cooperation was an inherent characteristic in workers. The mechanics of cooperation and particularly its corollary, non-cooperation, stimulated some innovative research.

Chester Barnard, a practising senior manager with close ties to the founders of the Harvard University school of management, was encouraged by Mayo and Henderson to “set out his thoughts on management and organisation” in 1938 (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:148). He was especially interested in why people flouted authority - often while officially acknowledging its legitimacy. Barnard (1968) observed that authority had no particular power of command unless there was someone who would cooperate with the order given. Thus, he concluded,

the decision as to whether an order has authority or not lies with the persons to whom it is addressed, and does not reside in 'persons of authority' or those who issue these orders. (Barnard, 1968:163).

In order to recognise a communication as authoritative, Barnard held that its receiver should understand it, believe it to be inconsistent neither with the purpose of the organisation nor the receiver’s personal interest and be able to comply with it. If workers felt orders appeared to conflict with either their own or the organisation’s interests, management would

98 Management theories which seek to engender workforce cooperation do not often stand the test of profit or market-share imperatives. In just one example, at British Leyland, Scarbrough (1986) found a fairly typical scenario. When British Leyland was facing an economic downturn and a Tory government in 1979, both its expansionist policy and its goal of securing the consent and cooperation of unions in the management strategy were abandoned in favour of a “ruthless programme of rationalisation” (Scarbrough, 1986:104).
have to devote energy to educating them as to the overall beneficial outcomes - this would enable workers to comply (Barnard, 1968:165). Barnard and other behaviourists considered a range of outcomes which workers might find attractive, where scientific management theorists concentrated on economic rewards, but essentially the sense of common purpose was much the same as that articulated by Taylor. Although Barnard considered cooperation the natural state, and uncooperativeness pathological, he asserted that people would not cooperate unless the *purpose* was accepted by them. From this, he concluded that cooperation within an organisation was an endorsement of its purpose. Nonetheless, Barnard appeared to deny his own assumptions when prescribing ways in which the executive should *induce* individuals to act toward the organisation's purpose, or to indoctrinate workers with the organisation's general objectives.

Barnard differed from other organisation theorists in that he paid considerable attention to the relationship between the roles of individuals and their motivation and behaviour, and little to the structural aspects of organisation.99 By the 1940s, following Weber's translation, theories which married both the human and structural factors of organisation were available. Silverman (1948:34) argued that if consent was not available to them, organisations might attempt to coerce or win consent from workers. Formal co-optation, a strategy where "elements" were co-opted into the leadership, was a means of doing this.100 Cyert and March (1963:27-29) saw the organisation as a "coalition of individuals" coexisting with "unresolved conflict" but for a "price, the worker adopts the 'organization' goal". It was this price which underwrote the workplace conundrum which remains for most practising managers: "co-operation, even of the 'spontaneous' kind, has to be created" (Thompson and McHugh, 1990:82).

Open systems theory suggested that within the firm, there was a unifying goal which engendered workforce cooperation; "there is, among the members of any organisation, a need, whether latent or manifest, to get on with the job. They take pride in doing it well" (Rice, quoted in Burrell 99 Writing before Weber was translated into English, Barnard was very influential. 100 It is a strategy, though, which does not necessarily advantage workers: according to Silverman (1948:34) "what is shared is the responsibility for power rather than power itself" (original emphasis).
and Morgan, 1979:156). Katz and Kahn (1966:339) perceived most organisational behaviour to be "intrinsically cooperative and interrelated". Yet, according to these same authors (Katz and Kahn, 1966:337), organisational survival was dependent upon the organisation being able to "engender in its members" behaviours such as preparedness to join the organisation and work in a dependable fashion within the job role and beyond it in order to achieve the organisation's goals. The amount of activity which management should undertake to engender this cooperation in workers was generally assumed to be reasonably limited by theorists. In the case of organisational change, for example, that cooperation with management initiatives would flow automatically from workers provided they were given enough information to allow them to fully understand the proposed changes was a common theme in the management literature (Barnard, 1968; Buckley, 1967; Drucker, 1987; McGregor, 1987). Management theorists differed, though, about the source of worker cooperation - which can be divided into two loose categories: those with a pessimistic or an optimistic view of the workers' desire to cooperate in the labour process (Inkson and Cammock, 1987; Tausky, 1992).

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y models of management behaviour illustrated the different types of strategies for managing workers which would arise depending on the pessimistic or optimistic beliefs of the manager - particularly with respect to organisational change. Workers were considered by Theory X managers to be inherently resistant to change (McGregor, 1987:129). McGregor felt it had been adequately observed that workers did resist change, but quarrelled with those who considered this an inherent response. Rather, he concluded, the workers' responses arose from the pessimistic set of assumptions held by managers which directed their behaviour towards their workers (McGregor, 1987:130). Theory Y professed another set of assumptions about worker behaviour - workers were not inherently resistant either to change or to identification with organisational goals:

The motivation, the potential for development, the capacity for assuming responsibility, the readiness to direct behaviour toward organizational goals are present in all people. Management does not put them there. (McGregor, 1987:133).
It was management’s responsibility to facilitate the expression of this inherent cooperativeness. Theory Y had moved on from the traditional assumptions held by Theory X managers that management was both able to ensure and responsible for the motivation of workers.

Organisational behaviour theorists have long recognised the problematic of what critical theorists know as the control/consent dichotomy. Theories such as Herzberg’s (1968) Hygiene/Motivation model illustrate the attempts management theory has made to grapple with the problem of generating worker cooperation with organisational goals. Herzberg’s answer was to concentrate on the job content - within the job itself could be found the potential motivators which corresponded with the psychological needs for achievement and growth. Herzberg recognised the role of the individual worker in cooperating with organisational goals when he addressed the “problem” of worker motivation - defining motivation as occurring when people want to do what you want them to do. Management theory has provided a list of techniques to motivate workers, and job participation and two-way communication were identified by Herzberg as two techniques designed to help people feel as though they were making a contribution to the decision-making processes associated with their job. He rejected the idea that participation in job changes would be beneficial to workers’ motivation because they would only have a sense of participation - as management was actually designing the changes (Herzberg, 1968:56-62).

Herzberg (1968:61-62) felt that it was the motivation arising from a changed job content which more fully addressed worker “needs” that management should pursue. In effect, then, Herzberg recommended that management take an enlightened approach to job design, based on the needs of the people in the jobs as well as the overall objectives of the organisation. Management could be trained to make these decisions and the better jobs provided would motivate workers to cooperate with organisational goals. Management’s role, therefore, was directing nascent human motivations towards organisational goals - which may have personally rewarding by-products such as recognition and sense of achievement for the worker but whose primary objective was to direct
those energies where they could provide the optimal benefit to the firm\textsuperscript{101}.

If there is resistance to managerial initiatives, modern OB theory advises looking at the reasons underlying the problem. The questions modern managers are exhorted to ask are similar to those suggested by the management classicists: Has management adequately communicated the need for change? Has the new work process been properly designed? Have workers been trained in the new ways? Do they understand the new expectations? Once the manager has investigated these options, a solution based on "basic principles of human behaviour" can be applied to "tailor a solution that fits the unique circumstances at hand" (Mitchell, et al, 1992:6).

**Summary: Consent as Cooperation**

In summary, then, management theory has not addressed the issue of worker consent. This thesis suggested that, to the extent that it approximates the concept, it does so in terms of cooperation, which means some kind of activity directed towards achieving organisational goals\textsuperscript{102}. Workers have been viewed by management theorists as either inherently cooperative or inherently uncooperative but, regardless of the orientation towards worker cooperation, there was a widespread understanding that worker resistance was possible, and that workers'...
cooperation should be sought. It was generally concluded that cooperation from workers would be forthcoming provided management supplied adequate communication, training and explanation to accompany its directions: a perspective which is in general agreement with a fairly deterministic ontological outlook - given the right situation, the desirable behaviour will follow. The management theory perspective on consenting behaviours is summarised in Diagram 2.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEORETICAL SOURCE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL CONCEPTION OF CONSENT AND ASSOCIATED MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Consent viewed as Cooperation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Relations</td>
<td>ASSUMES: Cooperative state the norm. Obtaining consent problematic because of environment. STRATEGY:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide a cooperative environment to allow cooperation to flourish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Management</td>
<td>ASSUMES: Cooperative state not the norm. STRATEGY: Educate as to benefits of cooperation. Provide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>concrete benefits, either economic or other. &quot;Find their price&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Systems</td>
<td>ASSUMES: Unifying goal in organisation. STRATEGY: Provide enough information to enable understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and therefore generate cooperation with achieving common purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neo Human Relations</td>
<td>ASSUMES: Workers inherently cooperative. Lack of cooperation due to management style or job content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ASSUMPTION 1: Management style creates uncooperative behaviour. STRATEGY: Change management style to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>facilitate cooperative behaviour. ASSUMPTION 2: Jobs are not motivating. STRATEGY: Change job content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to motivate worker cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Behaviour</td>
<td>ASSUMES: Workers inherently cooperative. STRATEGY: High quality communication; good job design; provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of training; explicate changing expectations as organisation adapts to changing circumstances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 2.5: Management Theory: Consent As Cooperation

Critical Theory And Worker Consent

As indicated earlier, organisations have been considered by industrial sociology to engender some elements of common interest among their members. This type of analysis does not provide, however, for a sense of the organisation as a "cooperative enterprise in which all pull together for the shared good". Nonetheless, workers have been seen to be
habitually cooperative; though with a highly developed sense of the constraints within which they operate, and the inability of changing the "facts of life" (Salaman, 1979:160-161). Fox (1974) considered all jobs to allow the worker some degree of discretionary decision-making, thus from all workers it was necessary to secure cooperation with management goals, no matter how small the degree of cooperation required. As Salaman (1979:169) has remarked, the absence of direct instructions or supervision in organisations is a common and notable characteristic. It will be recalled that critical theory did not accept management's control of the labour process as a divine right. This perspective influences the approach which critical theory has taken to the study of consent. Although not widely developed in terms of the mechanisms whereby consent is generated, the concept has long been appreciated as part of the dialectic of the labour process: the control/consent dichotomy. Thus, critical theorists have not assumed consent to management control to be a "given" in the employment relationship. The concept is therefore directly addressed in the critical literature and does not have to be implied from cooperation, though this is seen to be an element of consent.

It is in radical sociology that the concept of consent has lately gained precedence in its relation to the capitalist labour process. Michael Burawoy, in his 1979 publication, Manufacturing Consent, distinguished between two types of capitalist labour processes: a despotic organisation of work wherein coercion predominates over consent; and a hegemonic organisation of work, wherein consent predominates (Burawoy, 1979:194). Whatever the particular strategy chosen, the recessionary climate has stimulated management to look for ways to "raise productivity and cut costs" (Bramble, 1989a:42) and the production techniques which have been employed to this end are not the traditional, direct-supervision ones. New production systems such as Just-In-Time and Total Quality Control have been found to be heavily reliant, not upon supervision, but upon worker cooperation (Bramble, 1989:28), because control over the labour process is stronger and less tenuous if not based upon economic reward alone.

This point was also made by Hyman (1989:51), who believed normative acceptance of the managerial right to control to be a much more effective
device than supervision, and Burawoy argued that a normative acceptance required that "coercion must be supplemented by the organization of consent" (Burawoy, 1979:27). In much the way that it is impossible to review the concept of control without referring to the concept of power, consent cannot be discussed without reference to legitimation. They are not the same, though, and Burawoy distinguished between the nature of consent and legitimation:

Unlike legitimacy, which is a subjective state of mind that individuals carry around with them, consent is expressed through, and is the result of, the organization of activities...the basis of consent lies in the organization of activities as though they presented the worker with real choices, however narrowly confined those choices might be. It is participation in choosing that generates consent. (Burawoy, 1979:27).

Littler and Salaman (1982:258-259) also distinguished between consent and legitimacy, and they did so in relation to management's achievement of each. They suggested that ideologies held by the workforce served to legitimate capitalism in a general way, and that management then buttressed these predispositions via a series of management ideologies which legitimised specific managerial controls in organisations. Once the "need" for management has been established, workers have "accepted the normality of their subordination. Resistance, when and if it occurs will be largely about details" (Littler and Salaman, 1982:259), a point taken up by Hyman (1989:31) who indicated that although workers were socialised into accepting management's right to control via education, the media, and other social influences, there was a gap between a general set of social values and consent to specific rules in the workplace. Thus, although this legitimising background has facilitated the macro-

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103 It is a false distinction to look at consent without looking at management control, as they are are often seen as opposite sides of the same coin, as in the Littler and Salaman definition above. Edwards (1979:17), for example, defines control as "the ability of capitalists and/or managers to obtain desired work behavior from workers". However, to enter a review of the literature on management control would detract from the focus of this thesis: the worker's experience of change. It was expressed earlier that management want to control the change process and the reader should assume that workers will be subjected to a variety of strategies to this end. It should not, however, be assumed, as Hill (1981) does, that control is something to which workers merely react: the concept of control can also be seen as something workers proactively desire, as will be evidenced in the case studies which form the empirical part of this thesis.

104 Employee resistance should always be incorporated into any analysis of labour/management relations, according to Patmore (1987:1) and Palmer (1988:150).
cooperation needed by capitalism, the daily performance of the labour process has needed to be fulfilled by behaviours which were congruent with organisational objectives. This was the role played by consent, which Littler and Salaman (1982:260) described as:

*modus vivendi* between management and the shop floor...[with] the construction of definite trade-offs and interactions which, while they can generate an adequate level of worker acquiescence, may have little to do with generating or reflecting, large-scale legitimations.105

Burawoy was particularly interested in how management "manufactured" consent for this purpose, and the role it played in the labour process.106 In his effort to understand how worker consent was manufactured at the shop floor level, Burawoy (1979) analysed the labour process at Allied Engineering and described what he saw and experienced as a participant-observer in terms of a game - the "making out" game, as he expressed it. This game involved the workers at Allied in a series of behaviours which, if successfully played, would increase their earnings. It was only by achieving a certain level of output that tool operators and sections could receive a wage above the base-line. Burawoy felt that involving oneself in the making out game meant consenting to its rules. Thus, making out, and the personal identity related to the worker's role in the game, compensated for the freedom and autonomy that was denied the worker.

Knights and Willmott (1989:538, 546-8) rejected this "compensation thesis", arguing that Burawoy did not really show that it was the workers

105 The negotiation of consent can certainly be part of a trade-off in the reform process, as noted by Frenkel (1988) in an Australian context, where the cooperation of the workers in the reforms would be rewarded by a range of benefits considered of value to their representative unions. Likewise, QWL programs were considered by Burawoy (1983:603) as "management's attempt to invade the spaces workers created under the pre-existing regime and mobilize consent for increased productivity".

106 Building on his earlier work, Burawoy identified a third dimension of consent generation - hegemonic despotism. The essence of this notion is particularly relevant to the current economic rationales which were outlined in Chapter One: in the "rational" interests of productivity and competitiveness, workers were now facing collective threats which Burawoy claimed manufactured a more collectivised consent. There is a renewed binding of the reproduction of labor power to the production process but, rather than via the individual, it occurs at the level of the firm, region or even nation-state. The fear of being fired is replaced by the fear of capital flight, plant closure, the transfer of operations, and disinvestment. (Burawoy, 1983:603).
who reproduced the conditions of their oppression, as his analysis did not give enough attention to the social psychology of managerial control with respect to observable activities of perpetuation of that control. “Subjects do not so much consent to the various technologies of power as enter into practices which are a condition and consequence of their reproduction” (Knights and Willmott, 1989:550).¹⁰⁷ This is a valid criticism of Manufacturing Consent, illustrating as it does Burawoy’s lack of concern for societal relations in general which help to constrain choices at work. Such causal influences are, however, too difficult to categorise as merely internal or external to the firm (P.K. Edwards, 1986:269; Urry, 1990:271). There are simply too many intervening variables for a meaningful categorisation to take place, and labour process theory has not always accommodated these variables in its analysis. For example, given a buoyant economic climate, effort bargaining may result in conditions which become integral to the organisation of work in the plant, thus forming part of the internal environment for subsequent generations of workers. Had external conditions not at some time been favourable, such an outcome may not have occurred. Similarly, at the shop floor level, warnings about “bad work” have been noted to result in affected workers leaving “voluntarily” to try their luck elsewhere. Management control is thus heightened over those who decide to remain. In short, the boundaries between internal and external factors which impinge on the labour process are often too uncertain to allow sectional analysis (P.K. Edwards, 1986:269-270). Burawoy (1979:157), though, did assert that in times of crisis, the external experiences could “become critical in organizing the collective will and in shaping workers’ responses to capitalism”; just as external conditions could help shape capital’s response to labour. Thus, the economic conditions of recent decades, including mass unemployment, have shifted the balance of power firmly towards capital (Littler and Salaman, 1985:102), which would suggest that economic coercion should be able to be quite easily complemented by hegemonic mechanisms of consent generation.

The making out game served to obscure the original nature of production relations at Allied - making out and increasing one’s own wage was seen

¹⁰⁷ Burawoy has also been criticised (Toth, 1993:296) for failing to consider that the game obscured elements of worker resistance which were not approved by management.
as the outcome of the game, rather than the production of surplus value and profit for the firm (Burawoy, 1979:82). Similarly, financial controls and other internal mechanisms was seen to obscure the surplus value of subordinate managers as well as miners and other blue collar workers in a study of National Coal Board mines in Britain (Hopper, Cooper, Lowe, Cupps and Mouritsen, 1986:110). Moreover, the state was viewed as playing an active role in establishing the importance of these practices, and the authors of the National Coal Board study criticised Burawoy for his lack of attention to the role of the state in creating the economic and legislative climate whereby the obtaining of surplus value could be obscured (Hopper, et al, 1986:126). Nonetheless, Burawoy's analysis of the making out game has provided labour process theory with a clear and interesting picture of the social relations of production, stimulating further research and showing that labour process theory could be used empirically (Edwards, 1986:49).

The game was seen by Burawoy to generate its own goals, in the way that capitalism generates its own interests via the organisation of the labour process. Neither have evolved democratically. Rather, the probability of winning - of obtaining satisfaction of income - generated consent to the rules and production relations. Burawoy considered the choice of whether or not to play the game was determined by structural features of the employing organisation, but Mahnkopf (1986:44) queried the reality of management's ability to generate consent given the external forces which constrained it, not least the fact that workers were social beings, not just work creatures. She suggested that management would find it difficult to engender a *moral obligation* to the work organisation. As has been previously noted, however, management expend considerable energy in

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108 Finlay (1988:29) has indicated the importance of the researcher's ideology in assessing the need for management to manufacture consent:

If it is assumed that cooperation is internal to production...then it is possible to suggest a different interpretation of [Burawoy's] game. The game is a compromise between managers and workers. Neither is supremely powerful on the shop floor, and the game and its rules are symptoms of their jockeying for position. The power of workers relative to management is represented by their ability to establish quotas, to prevent rate cutting, to ensure loose rates on tough jobs, and to maintain the principle of worker mobility among jobs according to seniority.

From a different ideological perspective, it could be asked why workers sought to effect these controls over the labour process if cooperation was inherent to production...

109 Burawoy has, in later work, incorporated the role of the state in establishing an external environment of hegemony (Burawoy, 1983, 1985).
designing strategies to increase workers' behavioural identification with the objectives of the firm, so the ability of management to generate consent would, on the face of things, appear quite healthy.

**Summary: Consent is Manufactured**

Recognition that the duality of the employment relationship "is associated with inducing a minimal level of consent" (Littler and Salaman, 1982:260) has provoked critical theory to inquire into the methods management uses to engender more desirable levels of consent and their reception among the workforce (Diagram 2.6). However, management has not been viewed as completely autonomous in this regard. The ability of the capitalist enterprise to generate consent should be seen against a background of very real worker cynicism regarding "a management style that pretended a community of interest" (Bray and Littler, 1988:568). Evidence has shown (Lever-Tracy, 1987:337) that management attempts to integrate workers into "harmonious systems" often fail. It is questionable, though, whether cynicism is pervasive to the extent of not succumbing to managerial techniques especially designed to elicit consent\(^{110}\). It is probable that vaguely-held notions of cynicism will not withstand concerted attacks upon them. Rather, cynicisms may be transferred to a general attitude toward corporate power whilst the worker's own organisation is exempted from the world view.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEORETICAL SOURCE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL CONCEPTION OF CONSENT AND ASSOCIATED MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radical sociology, labour process theory.</td>
<td>ASSUMES: Employment relationship is inherently antagonistic. Workers have a normative legitimation of management control, derived from the wider society, but consent must be manufactured to effect cooperation with specific workplace rules. STRATEGY: Hegemonic control strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 2.6: Critical Theory: Manufactured Consent

110 According to an ex-shop steward at Ford in Australia: "I kept telling the men, the enemy is not the foreman, but the forces behind him" (Lever-Tracy, 1987:343). A hard line to sell in times like these, when management's star is on the rise!
Consent was seen to be related to legitimation in critical theory; providing the world view which supported the general claims of capitalism upon a worker's loyalty and orientation to work. It is to the world view that this discussion must now turn, in contemplating the problem of worker legitimation.

IV. THE PROBLEM OF WORKER LEGITIMATION

C. Wright Mills (1959) considered legitimation to be one of the "master symbols" of society, and that legitimation of coercion was frequently the means by which consensus was obtained (Mills, 1959:46). Seen from this perspective, legitimation is created: "We cannot assume today that men must in the last resort be governed by their own consent. Among the means of power that now prevail is the power to manage and manipulate the consent of men" (Mills, 1959:40). Legitimation, in this view, is the foundation upon which consent is built. If legitimation can be stage-managed, there must be legitimation strategies, but the ideals behind these strategies need not necessarily be believed, even in extremis, as Mills (1959:39) argued:

We might well imagine a 'pure type' of society, a perfectly disciplined social structure, in which the dominated men, for a variety of reasons, cannot quit their prescribed roles, but nevertheless share none of the dominator's values, and thus in no way believe in the legitimacy of the order. (Emphasis added).

Legitimation was defined in Chapter One as a sphere of normative orientation which was shared by management and workers and which served to legitimate authority (Mahnkopf, 1986:47). It was therefore a "process whereby social knowledge explains and justifies prevailing social reality" (Cipriani, 1987:9). Yet although some organisational theorists have been concerned with the legitimation of power (see Coser111 (1956)

111 The "degree and kind of legitimation of power and status systems are crucial intervening variables affecting the occurrence of conflict", according to Coser (1956:38).
and Blau\textsuperscript{112} (1964), for example, albeit in a fairly limited way, a great many management-oriented theorists have not seriously considered the concept in its political sense at all;\textsuperscript{113} not really questioning the legitimacy of the structures of domination, which are "taken for granted" (Clegg, 1994:4)\textsuperscript{114}. Thus, in a similar manner to the way the worker-centred concept of consent has been developed in management theory as cooperation, this thesis proposes that legitimation is a construct best demonstrated by the management-oriented concept of commitment. Worker commitment has been described as an identification with managerial goals and standards, embodying some form of social exchange, where the efforts and involvement of workers are rewarded by the organisation (Brewer, 1993) - a perspective which picks up the notions of normative orientation and of some kind of action oriented toward a desired end, and not simply an internalised predisposition to act.

Management Theory And Legitimation

Two major approaches in management theory have been taken to the discussion of worker commitment to organisational goals: worker commitment as a result of commitment strategies or good management, and withdrawal of inherent commitment as a result of bad management. Some writers considered worker commitment to be a reward which management could reap if they carefully planned and adhered to a strategy which was principally concerned with developing worker commitment. This approach was notable in the work of Follett, Sheldon,

\textsuperscript{112} Blau "traces the manner in which the legitimation of power has its source in the social approval its fair exercise evokes among subordinates. His analysis recognises that normative consensus is by no means automatic, and that the exercise of power will not always be legitimized" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:89).

\textsuperscript{113} Where organisational legitimation is considered in a political fashion, it tends to be in the sense of how the organisation as a reified entity establishes its legitimacy in the external environment in which it operates (this is the general focus in structural analyses in OT - Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990, are an excellent example).

\textsuperscript{114} Even where there has been a tendency to accord the concept of legitimacy some place in analysis, it is weakly developed: Zald (1993:525), writing about the need to fully explore the context within organisational relationships occur, has held that, although social psychology has long been concerned with the legitimacy of distributive justice in organisations, this analytic focus needs to be expanded to include distributive justice in the wider society. In their study of the legitimation of income inequality across nine nations, including Australia, Kelley and Evans (1993:75-76) found "widespread agreement on the legitimate earnings of low-status occupations and a single normative hierarchy in all nine countries....[although there was] substantial dissensus on the magnitude of inequality (original emphasis).
Argyris, Fielder, and the sociotechnical systems theorists (who gave some consideration to potential resistance to these strategies). Generally, one of the most popular outcomes of a commitment strategy was seen to be when workers “owned” the decision (Handy, 1985). Commitment to a course of action was “internalised” and therefore longer-lasting than mere compliance or cooperation. Sociotechnical systems theorists considered the problem of legitimacy in relation to worker compliance with organisational objectives and purpose: “Compliance with any institutionalised pattern is always problematic. The problem of legitimacy continually recurs and cannot be escaped” (Silverman, 1970:213). Part of this problematic occurred because there was a problem with determining causality in employment relationships. Emery and Trist have developed this point:

[W]e may lawfully connect the actions of a javelin thrower in siting and throwing his weapon; but we cannot describe in the same concepts the course of the javelin as this is affected by variables lawfully linked by meteorological and other systems (Emery and Trist, 1965:22).

Thus, the “causal texture” of the organisational environment was quasi-independent (Emery and Trist, 1965:24) because the “laws connecting parts of the environment to each other are often incommensurate with those connecting parts of the organization to each other, or even those which govern exchanges” (Emery and Trist, 1965:30). When theorists came to consider legitimacy, then, it was difficult to ascertain causal connections between perceptions, attitudes, events and behaviours, as Silverman explained in regard to organisational attachment:

[T]he attachment of the [organisational member] to the dominant system of expectations may be less than complete, and his compliance with the demands of authority may be carried out for different purposes and with varying degrees of enthusiasm (Silverman, 1970:176).

However, management theory generally recognised the necessity of engendering worker commitment to new forms of work organisation, usually because organisational commitment had become tied in research to productivity: if workers were committed to organisational goals, they would be more productive. Part of this commitment could be engineered
by an effective socialisation process: The “fit” between the organisation and its workers should be ensured.

Argyris (1957) was interested in discovering the mutual impact of the relationship between the individual and the organisation. He drew from the works of psychologists such as Carl Rogers, Lewin and Erikson in order to establish some basic assumptions about personality development, which could then be used to generalise about the type of organisational structure best suited to obtaining the best from people in the workforce. This posed more questions than it answered, for Argyris (1987:153) found that the ideal forms of organisational structure were inherently conflictual with the needs of mature adults.\(^{115}\) Argyris, though, was unusual - generally the complexities of fit between organisations and the individuals within them have been seen as challenges to which sound management is equal. Indeed, successful organisations would ensure their socialisation process was designed so “the workers’ attitudes and behaviour are gradually shaped until they conform to prevailing norms and role expectations” (Mitchell, et al, 1992:488). Underlying this approach is the premise that management can and should devote efforts to ensuring workers legitimise the ‘way things are done around here’ in the belief that effective socialisation can “serve to increase a worker’s commitment to an organization” (Mitchell, et al, 1992:491).

Organisational commitment as understood in management theory equates to an identification of individuals and/or groups with organisational goals - the goals of the collective rather than of the individual (Etzioni, 1986:231), as the following view demonstrates:

\begin{quote}
The restructuring of behavioural processes towards cooperation and harmony, efficiency and effectiveness, productivity and innovation, shared outlook and values, is...crucial for the steady growth and development of organisations...The most important purpose of organisational processes is to liberate human energies for the performance of tasks required by the organisation and society...The basic assumption/precondition in this context is the internalisation of the core norms of
\end{quote}

\(^{115}\) A view he reiterated in a retrospective comment some thirty years later, and for which he has been roundly criticised on the grounds that he misrepresented as sound some flawed principles of organisational theory (Koontz, 1987:252).
productivity and their spiritual base by organisational personnel at all levels. (Rastogi, 1988:211).

Given that establishing the fit between the individual and the organisation may be a lengthy process, management theory has considered the role of leadership in stimulating commitment. Fieldler's (1986) Contingency Model takes as given that a leader cannot always rely on workers' recognition of his/her authority. However, the primary aim of his research was to establish a fit between particular leadership qualities and the organisational context - worker responses were one of a number of variables which constituted that context. With the appropriate leader, worker cooperation and commitment was automatic. Even early writers in management theory, such as Follett and Sheldon, considered the role of leadership in eliciting worker commitment. Authority and supervisory systems were necessary to ensure worker cooperation with the scientific method of production, according to Rowntree's Oliver Sheldon (1987:70), but the leadership function within the organisation should be of the type which would aid the development of "a corporate spirit of loyalty and high endeavour".

The second approach viewed worker commitment in a similar manner to some views on cooperation - that is to say, the desire to be committed to the organisation was inherent in workers, but could be thwarted by bad management practice and undesirable influences from collective organisations who were often external to the firm. Watson (1980:43) has argued that the Human Relations school grew within the context of the problem faced by industry in "controlling the increasingly large-scale enterprises of the post-war period and the problem of legitimating this control in a time of growing trade union challenge". Certainly, all management theorists dealt with these issues; albeit in different ways, as has been seen.116

116 Waring (1991) divided significant theorists into two groups, Post-Taylorist bureaucrats and Post-Mayo corporatists. The bureaucrats legitimised the concepts of centralised power and specialisation in the division of labour. However, they also realised the impracticality of the ideal form of the bureaucratic and scientific management models, so they devoted considerable effort to developing methods of control and work organisation techniques which would overcome technical difficulties while upholding the general philosophy of Taylorism. Corporatists recognised the organisational conflicts which arose from Taylorism and overly bureaucratic management structures in modern organisations. They desired more democratic and participative management (Waring, 1991:7). However, although they "portrayed each other as ideologues from opposite ends of the political system" the bureaucrats
Provided management was prepared to address the many facets of human motivation, increased organisational commitment, job satisfaction and productivity were all available from workers in large measure, according to the research findings of Rensis Likert (1967:14-16). Likert identified four issues which management needed to consider in motivating workers towards these mutual benefits: ego motives (self worth); creativity and curiosity; economic and security motives. If all these areas of the worker personality were addressed by the job s/he performed, there would be no reasonable cause for resistance to management initiatives or resentful attitudes. In addition, Likert (1987:219) recommended the need for worker “participation and involvement” in decision-making to foster “cooperative and favourable rather than hostile attitudes”. Management could not expect workers to commit themselves to the organisation if their jobs did not provide them with a sense that their role in the organisation was meaningful and that they were doing a job which was “difficult, important and meaningful” (Likert, 1987:223). A difficult task for management if the job was not!

Obtaining worker commitment has not been considered a prerequisite of good management by all management theorists. Walton (1992:473), for example, suggested that management should only use the ‘commitment model’ if it was appropriate to the operating context of the firm - if commitment strategies were used in organisations where there was no genuine commitment, the organisation was at risk. Thus, organisational commitment could be a genuine desire of management, or a coolly-planned approach which could be particularly helpful in achieving a positive “leverage” on worker performance, especially in times of organisational change, as change has been seen to be more rapidly implemented by a committed workforce.

Clegg (1994:11) considered the “excellence literature” to exemplify the trend towards an expectation that workers should have a “moral relationship with the organization”. Notably, Clegg referred to the organisation as the appropriate recipient of the workers’ commitment; workers should not direct their loyalty to their own jobs. Indeed, job ownership has been viewed as counter-productive in terms of overall...
organisational commitment as the primary source of worker identification in that scenario focuses on the job and protection of that job, even if doing so will interfere with management objectives for the organisation as a whole (Ashforth, 1989:630). The management perspective, then, has not only required workers to legitimate management authority, but demanded that they extend this legitimation to the sphere most conducive to the continued reproduction of that commitment. Yet the imperative has remained unquestioned and unexplored.

Summary: Legitimation as Commitment
This thesis has proposed that the concept of legitimation is most closely approximated in management theory with that of commitment; which encompasses a normative acceptance of, and orientation to, management control and the organisation's objectives. It was suggested that management theory viewed commitment in two ways: as a reward management could obtain if they undertook to develop a sense of commitment in workers; or as an inherent characteristic of workers which management could lose through undesirable influences acting on workers' loyalties, or through bad management. In neither perspective was the legitimacy of managerial prerogative questioned, though the capacity for workers to resist commitment strategies was noted. These views are summarised in Diagram 2.7.

If one accepts Daft and Lewin's (1993:ii) view that "Managers in many organizations are at the frontier of finding new ways to use both the human resources and technology in the creation of new organizational forms", it becomes even more imperative that organisations should not be studied as value-free entities whose concerns lie only with production and profit. Organisations should be analysed in terms of their actual impact in society, recognising them as "instruments of power and domination...major sources of the individual's sense of wholeness and participation or alienation and worthlessness" (Zald, 1993:517). Fortunately, there are more critical perspectives which are able to take up this challenge.
### Critical Theory And Legitimation

The notion that the legitimacy of management control of the social relations of production was not inherent to the employment relationship but was in fact structured and supported by ideologies germane to that purpose has been a fundamental precept of critical theory. Thus, critical theory has evaluated worker legitimisation of managerial authority as "the situation in which the controlled grants his controller the right to control him" (Salaman, 1980:22) and has considered organisational legitimacy in terms of "senior members' efforts to define their control over others as normal, proper and necessary" (Salaman, 1979:110). This has led to a definition of legitimacy as "a condition where organisational members regard the hierarchical structure of the organisation, the distribution of rewards, tasks and power and pattern of domination, as necessary and right" (Salaman, 1979:46).

Critical theory is characterised in its approach to worker legitimisation by its consideration of the social structures which surround worker acquiescence or resistance to managerial authority. Weber was instrumental in stimulating this approach and his early theories about

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<tr>
<td>Socio-Technical Systems, Scientific Management, Organisational Behaviour</td>
<td>Legitimation viewed as commitment to mgt/organisational objectives/purpose. ASSUMES: Workers are not inherently committed to the organisation. STRATEGY: Socialisation to restructure worker orientations to the firm's goals; develop appropriate leadership styles to foster commitment; identify areas of potential resistance and design strategies to overcome them.</td>
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<td>Human Relations, Neo Human Relations (Motivationists)</td>
<td>Legitimation viewed as commitment to mgt/organisational objectives/purpose. ASSUMES: Workers are inherently committed to the organisation, but this is thwarted by bad management or undesirable influences. Commitment dependent upon management strategies within the firm. STRATEGY: Motivation strategies to enhance commitment; participation in decision-making (&quot;owned&quot; decisions enhance commitment).</td>
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modern organisations, and in particular the bureaucratic form, have retained their importance in current academic literature across a variety of social disciplines. One of the values of Weber’s work is its freshness to readers who take as given modern forms of work organisation - Weber’s analysis is a reminder of its contrived nature. Industrial sociologists have attributed Weber with the concept of bureaucracy as a form of organisation characterised by particular structures and legitimations of control (Salaman, 1979:12). In order to function effectively to achieve the goals of capitalist enterprise, organisations had to develop structures which allowed natural human behaviour to be channelled towards defined organisational ends and this process involved some degree of “voluntary submission” (Weber, 1971:67-68) towards authority. Weber considered that the continuing nature of capitalist organisations required continuing authority relations, and the evocation of the legitimacy of existing power structures was the vehicle by which this could be achieved:

It is an induction from experience that no system of authority voluntarily limits itself to the appeal to material or affectual or ideal motives as a basis for guaranteeing its continuance. In addition every such system attempts to establish and to cultivate the belief in its ‘legitimacy’. (Weber, 1971:68, emphasis added).

Thus, critical theory has again recognised the dialectic of control in the employment relationship, the effectiveness of the managerial hierarchy being dependent upon “some predictable and conformist behaviour by those in subordinate positions” (Storey, 1980:100).117

Alvin Gouldner (1954), in a seminal case study of the social relations of production at a gypsum mine in the United States of America, sought to test Weber’s basic assumption that people obey rules by examining how the legitimacy of authority was established in the face of considerable

117 Paradoxically, though, sustained opposition to management via the union depends to no small degree on management’s recognition and participation in order to allow effective collective activity (Storey, 1980:111). So workers’ attempts to exert control over their working environment require some acquiescence to the role of the collective organisation on the part of management. There is a dual need for recognition of the legitimacy of the control aspirations of the parties:

[T]he structures and means of control are socially produced and their continued existence are therefore conditional upon workers and managers continuing to reproduce them. (Storey, 1985:197).
resistance and opposition. Gouldner’s (1954:237) contention was that bureaucratic rules were not inevitable but, rather, the outcome of initiative and resistance within the organisation. He identified three distinct patterns of bureaucracy at the mine, all of which accorded a particular type of authority relations: Mock Bureaucracy referred to “the kind of special relations that emerge if the norms of the indulgency pattern are administratively implemented” (Gouldner, 1954:187) - for example, there was a no-smoking rule, but this wasn’t enforced unless the insurance inspector came. The second type was Representative Bureaucracy, which was characterised by the “day-to-day participation of the workers in its administration, though it was not in any sense an ‘ideally’ democratic pattern” (Gouldner, 1954:205). The third type was Punishment-centred Bureaucracy, where rules were enforced by one group at a time as a form of discipline (management) or grievance (workers).

Thus, Gouldner’s contribution to an understanding of authority relations at work extended Weber’s analysis of the bureaucratic model to take account of both resistance and accommodation on the part of workers to authority structures. Weber itemised the basis on which legitimate authority was built, and Gouldner indicated that workers would not legitimise authority unless they were being told to do something which was “congruent with [their] own ends and values” (Gouldner, 1954:221, original emphasis). Where this was not the case, disobedience to the rule could invoke the punishment response from the bureaucracy. So long as the supervisor or manager could legitimate the punishment in terms of the rule, it allowed him/her to take the action when their own authority was threatened (Gouldner, 1954:224). This analysis allowed a more ‘human’ understanding of the forces at play in generating worker legitimacy of organisational forms and the rules within organisations, particularly as Gouldner related them to “varying social origins, community ties and other wider influences” (Rose, 1975:230).

Fox (1971) reasoned that workers’ perception of the legitimacy of the particular management function underwrote the concepts of power and authority in the workplace. If the worker perceived management directions to be legitimate, that function was viewed as an exercise of authority. If workers perceived management control mechanisms as
being outside their legitimate sphere of control, they were considered to be exercising power. Thus authority and power did not exist as objective elements, but were tied by Fox to workers’ subjective experience of them. Power was the control technique used by management if authority failed to generate worker cooperation with management goals. The use of power against workers was seen to be inherently conflictual, as it opposed worker notions of fairness, and particularly notions of what was a “fair cop” for transgressions of organisational norms:

[T]he greater the extent to which the desired performance depends on the willing cooperation and initiative of the worker, the more prejudicial to performance becomes the exercise of compulsion against him and the greater the importance of normative agreement. (Fox, 1971:39).

Where management theory did not question the legitimate right of management to control the production process, Fox argued that management’s authority had a variety of bases of legitimacy, all of which were underwritten by “normative agreement upheld by shared values” between employers and workers. As the base of legitimacy was not fixed, the range of legitimate managerial authority was constrained by the normative orientation of particular workers. If control mechanisms were within this “zone of acceptance” they would be accorded legitimacy; if not, the worker would consider them ultra vires and not an exercise of authority. The range and acceptance of managerial authority was considered to be flexible, and dependent not only upon workers’ normative orientations, but also their experiences of their present and other employers. In short, worker acceptance of managerial authority could not be assumed as infinite or as having a single basis (Fox, 1971:42-43).

Authority was further broken down into the legitimacy of procedural and substantive norms, which were seen by Fox to lie along a continuum of response, from total acceptance of managerial authority to total rejection. Both these extremes were considered rare and the characteristic behaviour in Western industrialised nations was likely to be “low-key acquiescence” (Fox, 1971:45), which meant that the zone of worker acceptance of managerial authority was reasonably broad, but workers remained aware that “their work destiny involves being used as instruments by others for purposes (and through means) about which
they have not been consulted” (Fox, 1985:54). Thus, workers were not committed to an identification with management objectives at any price:

The degree of observance of norms by the individual is the outcome of an interaction between the strength of his commitment to the values underlying the procedural norms and his substantive or procedural aspirations. (Fox, 1971:48).

Fox suggested that the basis for most managerial authority lay in the workers’ normative acceptance of a rising standard of living associated with adherence to managerial objectives. He considered this a fairly weak basis of legitimation because of the inability of management to control worker expectations, but stressed the role of socialisation in attuning citizens from a young age in obedience to traditional authority relations (Fox, 1971:25).

Critical theory has recognised that there is a ‘gap’ between what is particularly prescribed for an worker to do, and what is actually needed to be done in order to effect a day’s work. “The moral obligation to work is so widely taken for granted” (Baldamus, 1961:85) that rules which were initiated by management to prescribe conduct were reinforced by notions of work effort which were apparently internalised by workers as part of the socialisation process of life in an industrialised country, as Fox has suggested. Baldamus’ 1961 study concentrated on the notion of effort and showed that regardless of the extent of prescriptive work rules, management could not fully control or prescribe work conduct (P.K. Edwards, 1990:141).118 Baldamus did not, however, examine “the normative relationship between reward and effort, and the underlying conflict” (Burawoy, 1979:11-12). Nonetheless, the role of decision rules, those “injunctions which are both explicit and tacit, formal and informal, and which provide a framework within which certain types of actions or arguments are legitimated and others are ruled out” have been of interest to critical theory - particularly so in times of change - because it is during

118 Baldamus [like Fox] was a worker, not originally an academic, who had experienced, on the shop floor, the “intensity of effort” which had not been explored by industrial sociologists of his era. He saw the labour process as very much controlled by management. In this respect, he differed from a large number of his peers, who tended to legitimise managerial goals of productivity and profit in their analyses of work (Nichols, 1980:13-14).
organisational change that these decision rules become more visible as they undergo alteration (Batstone, et al, 1984:65-66).

It has been noted that industrial sociologists have contemplated management’s right to control the production process, and not taken that prerogative as given (Fox, 1971; Gouldner, 1954; Weber, 1971; Salaman, 1979, et al.). Management has been viewed as having to develop strategies to legitimate their control function and they have been helped in this by the activities of the state in “seeking to induce universal agreement that private property in the means of production confers certain ‘rights’ upon the owner” and contriving the belief that the employment relationship is one which is freely entered into by two parties of equal legal status (Fox, 1971:40). Thus has critical theory viewed workers’ bestowal of legitimation as an important variable in the exercise of management authority. Unless workers legitimate the role and functions of management, these functions are not able to be performed. The firm itself is not the only player in this process; the role of society and the state are also seen as instrumental in the socialisation processes which define the situations within which legitimacy will be accorded. Thus, there can be seen to be ideological forms of control which define the nature of the employment contract, the nature of the organisation, the necessity for organisational hierarchy, the neutrality of the organisation’s objectives and activities, the justice and legitimacy of any individual’s location within the system, and the benefits which all derive from organisational life. (Salaman, 1979:159).

Once they have entered into the employment relationship, workers are subjected to a range of socialisation processes which serve to legitimise the particular role and function of management control systems.

119 An example of how such social knowledge can be used to explain and justify the prevailing social reality was given by Bourricaud (1987) when he illustrated the use of increased productivity and competitiveness as rationales given by management to legitimise workplace reforms. Not uncommon rationales, as was demonstrated in Chapter One, and which will be evidenced in the case studies which follow. Similarly, arguments about efficiency “can be used as a legitimating device for politically-informed decisions on the technical and social organisations of work” (Wilkinson, 1983:25).
Far from power being regulated...by common value-orientations, power has been used to socialise the powerless into accepting values which justified the existing distribution. These values may then develop an autonomous life of their own, shaping interactions and institutions quite independently of the power which originally promoted and disseminated them. (Fox, 1971:56).

High labour productivity has been considered dependent upon "the reproduction of existing social relations, that is labour's acceptance of the status quo and management's legitimacy" (Bramble, 1989:25). P.K. Edwards (1986:231), for example, found that IBM aimed to ensure worker commitment via a range of human resource management techniques such as monitoring worker attitudes, grievance procedures, personal merit-based pay systems, job bands and a no-redundancy policy. IBM was a non-unionised firm, but appeals to worker commitment can be made to the individual worker even in those organisations where a strong union operates. Thus, "generous" sick pay and the existence of semi-autonomous work teams have been found in a process factory: Evidence of "sophisticated managerialism", where "workers efforts are secured...through inducing a broader willingness to work" (P.K. Edwards, 1986:231,239).

The notion of the willingness to work has captured the sense of the concept of legitimacy, because it has indicated the essential role legitimised ideologies have played, and continue to play, in an industrial society:

The importance of notions and levels of legitimacy does not depend upon the achievement of a constantly deferential, acquiescent and obedient workforce....The importance of these efforts is that they supply, when successful, a moral backdrop against which particular circumstances are argued or are seen to be exceptional. (Littler and Salaman, 1982:259).

In his book, *The Tragedy of Technology*, Stephen Hill (1988) showed how the legitimacy of technological "progress" had been manufactured in capitalist society and elsewhere, with the result that culture has been irretrievably altered by a series of social processes and values with

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120 A policy which underwent considerable alteration, as recent years have shown!
traceable antecedents. There is a great deal of ritual and myth associated with modern work practices, according to Hill: the seven-thirty a.m. to four p.m. work shift, performing routine duties, and the rest. The workers' options are circumscribed by the myths that are generated by the dominant (Hill, 1988:68) and legitimacy "persists only as long as daily experience aligns with perceptions of meaning (and horizons of accepted privilege), and the trajectory of the order as a whole" (Hill, 1988:12).

Hyman (1989:31) considered legitimacy too strong a concept to be applied to workers' perceptions of management's right to control the labour process, preferring Fox's (1971) term, "low key acquiescence". Hyman argued that it was only instructions outside the normal range which would provoke resistance and choice, for the employment relationship "naturally" embodied a hierarchy of control which was accepted and not challenged. "[M]ost employees would not explicitly challenge the fundamental principles of the political economy and the basic structure of incomes deriving from this" (Hyman and Brough, 1975:203). Yet what Hyman and Brough has described could be (and is, in the present context) considered a situation of successful legitimation of authority structures. Following this line of reasoning, low-key acquiescence then belongs to the concept of consent and it is in areas where workers feel management has every right to have total say, that legitimacy is accorded. For example, in the case of organisational change, the worker might legitimate management's right to initiate workplace change, but will not legitimate management "interference" in specific aspects of the change process if his/her job interests are threatened.

Summary: Flexible and Manufactured Legitimation
Critical theory differs from the management theory approach to worker legitimation in that the role of the worker in according legitimation is stressed by sociologists and the complexities of this process are recognised. (The critical approach to legitimation is summarised in Diagram 2.8.) Thus, the critical perspective is the stronger of the two, as it allows a fuller understanding of the tensions which do exist in organisations to be explored: it has not been empirically shown, for example, that the commitment and worker involvement strategies of management actually affect the type of workplace industrial relations enjoyed by organisations (Batstone, 1988:195). Another strength shown by critical
anlayses was in the identification of the source of organisational legitimation. Where management theory assumed that legitimation was dependent on managerial strategies within the firm, critical theory has assumed that worker legitimation is a function of socialisation processes both within and outside the firm, and that worker legitimation is not fixed but is flexible as to situation and personal experience. This is more in accordance with the picture of the individual as a broadly social, rather than simply organisational, being. Finally, legitimation means more than commitment in critical theory, where it goes to the heart of authority and power relations in the production process.

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| Radical / industrial sociology. | Legitimation viewed in terms of authority and power.  
ASSUMES:  
The granting of legitimation is flexible and thus capable of being withheld.  
STRATEGY:  
Management must develop strategies to ensure legitimation of their power/authority structures. These may be resisted.  
The state contributes by socialising people to the legitimacy of existing power structures (including those within organisations) and inculcating a broader "willingness to work".  
Management and the state use efficiency and productivity imperatives to engender legitimation of a range of organisational decisions. |

Diagram 2.8: Critical Theory: Flexible And Manufactured Legitimation

Examining the processes by which legitimation is manufactured, and to what extent it is manufactured can thus provide considerable insight into the way in which capitalist production relations are structured and perpetuated; and the role of workers in according and contributing to the legitimacy of the structures of domination can be brought into the light of day.

CONCLUSION

Working life involves not only individuals who assume the role of workers, managers, owners or customers at particular times during the
course of their lives, but also formal structures known as organisations, which house and provide outcomes of the efforts which emanate from the activities of the people within their purview. In the way that society is more than its constituent parts, organisations are composed of individual efforts, yet are something other than their aggregated output; and this peculiarity has long stimulated scholars of human endeavour to try and understand the interaction between people and organisations. This review has surveyed some of the fruits of those endeavours, to discover how the individual worker is constituted in contemporary management and critical theory; how this affects the role accorded to the individual in organisational change; and by what means individuals consent to and legitimate organisational experiences.

Individuals And The Roles They Play In Organisational Change

OT perspectives have generally regarded individuals as products of the structures of the social world they inhabit and this structural determinism has led theorists to discount individuals in organisations; if workers are structurally determined, the appropriate level of concern is the organisation's structure. Effective organisational structures will facilitate effective organisational performance (Woodward, 1965; Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967) and Durkheim's belief that the world was composed of social facts which delineated individual experience has influenced the structural organisation theorists (Simon, 1957; March and Simon, 1958). Weber's argument that situations are given meaning by those who experience them remains evident in the interpretivist approach to OT, which is principally concerned with organisational culture and which provides a limited incorporation of individuals into its analysis. Interpretivists are concerned with the behaviour of individuals in organisations to the extent that they are members of groups whose interaction defines the organisation's culture (Jermier, et al, 1991). It is OB which provides theoretical explanations for the behaviour of individuals in organisations, but only in terms of their behaviour as job incumbents. The approach here is also deterministic, as the assumption is made that individual behaviour is determined by psychological characteristics which can be identified and addressed (as in the neo human relations approaches of McGregor, Likert and Argyris).
Both OB and OT locate human behaviour within the organisation; and neither approach analyses the relationship of organisational structure and hierarchy to those extant in the wider community. This influences the strategic approach which management theorists advocate in organisational change, which is represented in Figure 2.1.

It can be seen from Figure 2.1 (which draws on information presented in Diagram 2.2) that management theory conceives the role of the worker in change to be constituted in four ways. The theorists’ conception of the worker determines the strategic approach to change which is advocated for management. These strategies act upon the worker and should result in appropriate organisational outcomes. Inappropriate outcomes are distinguished by a broken line and indicate the way organisational realities such as conflict and unintended consequences are explained - as a result of either pathological worker behaviour or bad management (views promulgated by Taylor, 1911; Simon, 1957; Argyris, 1957; Likert, 1967, and others).

Industrial sociology viewed individuals as acting upon and within society with both deviant and conformist behaviour accepted as “normal” (Gouldner, 1973). The individual occupies a role in an organisation and it is as role occupiers that individuals are of interest to industrial sociologists. In this perspective, organisations are seen to reflect the norms, values and power structures that exist in the society of which the organisation forms a part (Salaman, 1979). Radical theory upholds this latter view and further locates those social facts as derived from the economic superstructure. In the radical perspective, Marx’s (1906) conceptualisation of the individual as a worker and member of the proletariat class is upheld. The concept of class, not fully developed by Marx before his death, is based on the ownership of the means of production. Those who own capital must purchase labour power in the marketplace and turn it into productive output which will create the surplus value which the firm needs to accumulate capital. Management assumes the role of capital and individuals the role of workers - the owners of labour power. Individuals, in this view, are of little interest except as members of collectivities who have the power and means of resistance to capital’s exploitation of labour. The fact that workers can
Figure 2.1: A Deterministic Model of the Role of Workers in Organisational Change: Management Theory
resist is important in radical sociology. This is because if resistance is assumed possible, management is then assumed to have some way of either minimising the impact of that resistance, or preventing it arising in the first instance (Braverman, 1974). Thus, radical sociologists are interested in the structures of control in organisations (Burawoy, 1979; Thompson and McHugh, 1989). Most contemporary critical theory makes at least some of these assumptions in its analysis of workplace relations. Figure 2.2 illustrates how these assumptions influence the understanding of the dynamics of workplace change.

The conception of a worker is as a member of an economic class which has limited power because it does not own the means of production - where economic, social and political power resides. However, this mass of disenfranchised workers does have the capacity to collectively resist and that knowledge influences management strategy. Management may invoke a number of methods to control the labour process in order to minimise the capacity for workers to resist: seeking to incorporate labour into the production process - to gain workers' active participation in and consent to organisational goals. Radical sociologists such as Burawoy (1979, 1983) believe that management seek to achieve this through a variety of hegemonic control mechanisms. In order to minimise the disruption to production occasioned by worker resistance, labour process theorists such as Braverman (1974) believe that management may seek to deskill labour. With control over only a portion rather than the whole of production, and capable of replacement from the reserve army of labour, worker resistance is less of a problem for management. Workers have less power because they can do less harm to management's objectives.

Workers are subject to all these forces and constraints, which are ranged against their "real" interests - the alleviation of the exploitation of the social and production relations of capitalism. The outcomes of management strategies will, according to radical theorists, always be against labour's real interests (Marcuse, 1968; Braverman, 1974; Burawoy, 1979; Habermas, 1979). It is argued that workers might perceive themselves to have achieved favourable outcomes through their association with management. If this occurs, workers are deemed to have been manipulated in participating with capital in their own exploitation,
Figure 2.2: A Deterministic Model of the Role of Workers in Organisational Change: Critical Theory
thus enabling management control to be sustained and reproduced over time. Radical theorists argue that the actual outcomes for workers in the capitalist labour process are necessarily bad - work intensification, deskilling and alienation are examples. Once conscious of these bad outcomes, workers will act against the organisation.

Burawoy (1979) has argued that management seeks hegemonic control at the expense of more direct or draconian control mechanisms because such a strategy is more likely to avoid unfavourable outcomes for the organisation. When workers become aware of the exploitative nature of capitalist production relations, they effect job controls and can withdraw effort as a means of collectively resisting further exploitation. Management strategies seek to avoid these outcomes. Regardless of the particular scenario, workers are deemed in the radical perspective to be determined by the economic forces which are acting upon them. There is no real benefit for workers in cooperating with capitalism and, to the extent that they do react positively to their production relations, workers are seen as victims of false consciousness, or active participants in their own downfall.

This thesis argued that the materialist approach was best equipped to handle the “reality” of the shop floor experience of workplace change. The non-Marxist critical theory of PK Edwards (Figure 2.3) views the individual as a relatively autonomous actor in the organisation. Though influenced by, and subject to, objective factors in the environment, the individual can act differently. The mode of production, organisation of the labour process and its concrete operation in the workplace all interact to create an environment which acts upon, and is acted upon by, individuals and collectivities in the workplace. Management strategy is influenced by workers’ actions and reactions and the worker is not only acted upon but has some autonomy relative to objective and subjective components of his/her environment. This perspective has some distinct advantages over the previous two approaches. Firstly, it does not ‘assume out’ the power and control structures extant in society, which is a weakness in management theory. Secondly, it ‘assumes in’ some subjectivity, which is generally not accredited in critical theory. Thirdly, because individuals are conceived of as relatively autonomous and not solely determined by their objective or subjective environments, this
Figure 2.3: A Materialist Model of the Worker as a Relatively Autonomous Actor in Organisational Change (After P.K. Edwards)
approach is able to assume that workers' positive experiences of the labour process and its outcomes are 'real'.

PK Edwards did not develop his materialist approach in an effort to provide a neat model of organisational behaviour (of conflict behaviour, in his case). Indeed, he eschewed such an approach; a decision which gives his perspective its fourth advantage. By not trying to account for all organisational events in terms of a parsimonious theory, this perspective allows the complexity of shop floor relations to emerge. In this, it is a truly dialectical materialism, as it conceives of simultaneously antagonistic and cooperative work relations occurring within objective and subjective environments. When applied to the study of organisational change, as can be seen in Figure 2.3, the materialist approach can incorporate planned and unplanned organisational outcomes, and desirable and undesirable consequences for both workers and management.

**Legitimation And Consent To Change**

This chapter has argued that management theory did not question management's legitimate right to control the labour process (Clegg, 1994), though exercising that right was acknowledged as problematic (Cyert and March, 1963; Silverman, 1970). The thesis proposed that the normative orientation component of legitimation was comprehended in management theory by the notion of commitment. That is to say, worker commitment to organisational objectives. It was also argued that worker consent to management control was assumed (Katz and Kahn, 1966; Barnard, 1968; Herzberg, 1968; McGregor, 1987), and the thesis suggested that consent was understood in terms of worker cooperation, meaning some kind of activity directed towards achieving organisational goals. Figure 2.4 synthesises the information presented earlier in Diagrams 2.4 and 2.6 and encompasses the conception of workers which has been carried over from Figure 2.1. Workers are seen as organisational components who have to be managed, along with all the other resources, in order that management can achieve its goals. Workers are further conceived of as either inherently cooperative or committed (as by the human relations and neo human relations and OB schools), or otherwise
CONCEPTION OF WORKER

Worker as an organisational component

Inherently cooperative/committed

Worker inherently uncooperative/uncommitted

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Provide cooperative environment
Change management style
Change job content
Participation in decision making

Educate
Provide concrete benefits
Socialisation
Appropriate leadership
Resistance-defying strategies

Worker cooperates with and is committed to management control and organisational objectives

OUTCOMES

Benefits for organisation and workers

Figure 2.4: Management Theory: Consent and Legitimation as Cooperation and Commitment
(as by scientific management). Each conception of workers has a range of strategies which can be applied to either garner the best or mitigate the intractability of workers. If management designs and applies appropriate strategies workers will cooperate with and be committed to organisational objectives, from the attainment of which both workers and management will benefit. This model is limited by its determinism and its non-critical acceptance of the existing power structures in society which give management its authority in organisations.

Critical theory addressed the concepts of consent and legitimation more directly (Burawoy, 1979; Littler and Salaman, 1982; Mahnkopf, 1986; Hyman, 1989 and others). This perspective, synthesising information contained in Diagrams 2.5 and 2.7 and Figures 2.2 and 2.3, is presented in Figure 2.5. It can be seen that the legitimation of management and authority structures in organisations derives from power relations in the wider society. The state acts to legitimate the existing social relations of production, socialising people to the legitimacy of existing power structures and inculcating a willingness to work (Baldamus, 1961; Fox, 1971; PK Edwards, 1986; Hyman, 1989; Hill, 1988). This willingness to work is assisted by the proletarianisation of labour. Labour’s conception as workers is defined, by radical theorists, in relation to the ownership of the means of production (Marx, 1906a). However, workers need not be wholly determined by their economic status, and have also been conceived of as relatively autonomous actors (PK Edwards, 1986).

Because of the unequal ownership and control of resources, the employment relationship is inherently antagonistic (Braverman, 1974), so workers’ legitimation and consent to management control are not guaranteed (Gouldner, 1954; Weber, 1971). Workers can shape the effort bargain at the point of production (PK Edwards, 1986), though there does exist a broad ‘zone of acceptance’ of management authority and power (Fox, 1971). Management uses hegemonic control mechanisms, when necessary, to engender consent to and cooperation with specific workplace rules (Burawoy, 1979). The state and management employ productivity imperatives to facilitate workers’ legitimation of the broad organisational agenda and particular management strategies (Fox, 1971; PK Edwards, 1986). Differing from the management theory model, the outcomes of these change strategies are not fixed; workers may withhold or withdraw either their consent or their legitimation. In addition, consent and
Figure 2.5: Critical Theory: Flexible and Manufactured Consent and Legitimation
legitimation are deemed interrelated by critical theory (Burawoy, 1979; Littler and Salaman, 1982; Hyman, 1989), so it could, theoretically at least, be possible to have a range of responses.

Concluding Remarks

Of the two management approaches to organisational analysis, OB has a more 'individualist' focus and OT takes a 'structural' approach. Neither perspective questions management's role in reflecting the power structures of the wider society or the legitimacy of this position. These matters are considered more fully by the critical approaches of industrial sociology and labour process theory; however, neither of these generally consider the experience of individual workers in their analysis. The radical ideology upon which labour process theory is built has led its proponents to deal with capitalist power structures and the constraints these place on organisational behaviour, but has resulted in an over-reliance on a collective focus.

From the structural deterministic approaches, it is possible to ascertain the objective features which exist in organisations - the organisational structures; the existing power bases and hierarchies; the roles and interactions between roles. From the interpretivist and psychological approaches, it is possible to discover how workers interpret that objective environment; appreciating that workers have needs and a range of emotions which filter their interpretation of their interaction with organisational structures and other organisational actors. From the critical perspectives, it is possible to locate workers' objective environment and their subjective experiences of that environment in a socio-politico-economic context: above all, the proletariat needs to work.

One of the strengths of critical theory is its historical and contextual (materialist) approach to the analysis of the labour process, but it can be enlivened and made more empirically specific by examining the experience of individual workers within the context of the capitalist employment relationship. Existing theory has not inquired into individual workers' objective and subjective experiences of workplace change in terms of their legitimation and consent behaviours and
attitudes and this thesis seeks to amend that neglect. The process by which a framework was developed to analyse workers' consent to and legitimation of organisational change from within a critical framework of inquiry forms the next subject of discussion.
Marxist Teleology

Marxist teleology is that which seeks to explain the human experience in terms of the purpose served by labour (Lukács, 1978:3). When we ask, then, what is the essential relationship of labour we are asking about the relationship of the worker to production (Marx, 1968:71, original emphasis). The essence of human labour...depends firstly on its arising amid the struggle for existence, and secondly on all steps of its development being products of man's own self-activity (Lukács, 1978:iii). The teleological concept of history is thus one which seeks to find meaning in what has happened, by asserting a creator of both purpose and movement to the goal (Lukács, 1978:5). Marx, of course, "denied the existence of any kind of teleology outside of labour (human practice)" (Lukács, 1978:8): "What is society, whatever its form may be?", asked Marx. "The product of men's reciprocal action. Are men free to choose this or that form of society for themselves? By no means" (Marx, 1963:181).

The Soviet Marxists

Marx's structural determinism was taken up by Plekhanov: "People's activity, their ideas and views, do not depend upon chance; they are subordinate to the laws of historical development" (quoted in Fomina, p.29). As has been seen, one of the constraining conditions which Marx (1968:127) considered fundamental were the production relations extant in the community, a view which Plekhanov later developed in relation to the social environment:

The qualities of the social environment are determined by the productive forces in any given age. Once the state of the productive forces is determined, the qualities of the social environment are determined, and so is the psychology corresponding to it, and the interaction between the environment on the one side and minds and manners on the other. (Plekhanov, 1947:201).

The notion that individuals are determined by the environment in which they find themselves was developed further by Plekhanov (1947:219-220), who felt that "the 'subjective method' in sociology is the greatest nonsense". It was misleading to counterpose the subjectivity of the individual with the objectivity of the masses, as the aggregate was a subjective one. "What are objective are not the views of the 'mob' but the relations, in nature or in society, which are expressed in those views. The criterion of truth lies not in me, but in the relations which exist outside me" (original emphasis). Thus, Plekhanov indicated a need to consider the complexity of social relations in sociology; arguing that Marx should not be read as a reductionist economic materialist. Indeed, it has been held that "it was precisely Marx who made people aware of the many dimensions and levels of social reality which must be investigated if man's progress and achievements are to be adequately described and explained" (Jordan, 1967:335).

The ontological structural-Marxist approach as interpreted by the Soviet Marxists was accordingly a very deterministic one, with Bukharin following Plekhanov's determinism:

If social phenomena follow a uniform law and if they are nevertheless the result of the actions of men, it follows that the actions of each individual also depend on something. It thus follows that man and his

---

121 Engels is responsible for the proposition that labour plays the central role in being human (Lukács, 1978:1).

122 According to Fomina's (authorised) translation, Plekhanov was "the first Russian Marxist" (p.9). The publishing date of this text is unknown, but believed to be in the 1960s.
will are not free, but bound, being subject also to certain laws...but, on
the other hand, what is this question of the dependence of the human
will? (Bukharin, 1926:33).

Bukharin (1926:37), well skilled in rhetorical questioning, went on to provide the reader
with an answer:

under all conditions, both usual and unusual, both normal and
abnormal, the will, the feeling, the actions of the individual man
always have a definite cause; they are always conditioned
(determined).

Thus, even though society was seen as the aggregation of individual feelings, desires,
wills and the like, once a certain level of organisation was achieved, “this social result
determines the conduct of the individual” (Bukharin, 1926:37,39).

The Structural Humanists (or Psychological Marxists)

Marx’s ontology has been accepted by most Marxist scholars, but there are others who
have sought to gain understanding of the perpetuity of the social and economic forces
which Marx elaborated via exploring their effects on human consciousness. Burrell and
Morgan (1979:32-33) have called this second group radical humanists and the former,
radical structuralists. Based on the assumption that a false consciousness is induced in
individuals because of the ideological superstructures within which they interact, radical
humanists are concerned with the ways in which people can be released from the social
constraints which inhibit their development - seeking to change the social world by
changing modes of cognition and consciousness. The intellectual foundations of radical
humanists are the German idealist school from Kant123 further informed by Hegel, as
interpreted by the early Marx and from Husserl’s phenomenology124. In the 1920s, Lukács
and Gramsci revitalised these subjectivist interpretations of Marxism and were followed

123 Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804) argued for the essential spirituality of the social world,
as opposed to the philosophy of empiricists such as Hume (1711 - 1776).

124 In one of his Paris Lectures, delivered at the Sorbonne in December, 1929
(Koestenbaum, 1964:lxvi), Husserl (1964:3) proclaimed Descartes as the “genuine
patriarch” of phenomenology. In 1912, he had outlined the basis of phenomenological
investigation:

In our phenomenological-kinetic method we have ascertained the
fundamental distinction among merely material thing...and
psyche...which dominates all apprehension of the world...As an
intuitively given articulation of experienced reality it precedes all
thinking, and inasmuch as experiential thinking in general is capable
of drawing its ultimate legitimizing basis from experience only by
‘adjusting’ itself to it...it is thus certain from the beginning that such
basically essential differentiations of objectivities that arise out of
basically essential ones in the constitutive apprehension must be
decisive for the separation of scientific areas and for the sense of their
problematics. (Husserl, 1980:1).

Husserl’s phenomenology led to two “major and important conclusions” (Koestenbaum,
1964:xi) which bear on the current discussion. He showed “to what extent the world is
our construction” and argued the Eastern notion of transcendental subjectivity: “the
unobserved observer that resides in all our perceptions, feelings, and thoughts”
(Koestenbaum, 1964:xi). Husserl’s phenomenology was a response to the influence of
the nineteenth century obsession with science and scientific methodologies, which had
seen “the human being, as subject...regarded as reducible in his entirety to object”
(Lübbe, 1978:102). Husserl’s life was spent in this environment, as he was born in the
same year as Darwin’s Origin of the Species and John Stuart Mills’ On Liberty were
published.
by the Frankfurt School\textsuperscript{125}, most notably Habermas, who investigated the possibility of a rational political commitment to socialism in societies in which science and technology are dominant; and Marcuse, who argued that superficial needs are assuaged at the expense of deeper needs in capitalist societies.

\textsuperscript{125} The Frankfurt Institute of Social Research.
CHAPTER THREE

CONSENT, LEGITIMATION AND THE WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF CHANGE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS

The role played by concepts in sociological research is an important one. Concepts provide a means by which social data can be classified; they explicate the phenomena underlying the principle concept; and they can indicate the manner in which analysis of the phenomena can best be performed (Bulmer and Burgess, 1986:247-248). Indeed, Bulmer and Burgess (1986:256) consider concepts to be "part of a theoretical web which represents a more abstract attempt to comprehend the phenomena under investigation". In seeking to understand workers' experiences of organisational change, then, it is necessary to locate the study within an appropriate theoretical and conceptual framework. The literature review established that the individual provided an appropriate level of analysis for the exploration of the production and reproduction of consent and legitimation in the employment relationship, and that a materialist approach provided the best theoretical context for identifying the individual as a worker, experiencing consent and legitimation as processes associated with the fundamental dynamics of the capitalist labour process. Thus, in trying to understand workers' experiences of organisational change with respect to their consent and legitimation, the most challenging task lies in operationalising those two concepts within a materialist framework of inquiry. This chapter undertakes that task in order to illuminate the objective and subjective experiences of organisational change.

THE ROLE OF CONTROL

This thesis considers the concept of control to be an important one in any investigation of workplace change, and there are a number of reasons for this interest. Management theory has suggested that workers should consistently devote their efforts to the accomplishment of organisational
goals, thus securing desirable benefits for themselves and the firm (Argyle, 1989:215). Workers, however, though malleable to some extent, are intractable to another and "are ultimately controlled by an independent and often hostile will" (Friedman, 1990:178). Hostile, that is, to the attempts of management to determine completely the structure and content of the working day and, in particular, to management's attempts to control the amount of effort expended by the worker. So management need strategies for control because such control may be resisted as parties to the employment relationship struggle to have their needs met. Thus Edwards' (1979) identification of the workplace as a "contested terrain", wherein the establishment of performance norms "actually construct potential areas for struggle" (Wardell, 1990:167). Yet P.K. Edwards (1986:279) found that "firms' modes of control cannot be reduced to one type or style; these modes are not created consciously but emerge out of concrete situations".

Thompson (1990:99-101) identified what he saw as the core elements of labour process theory. As indicated below, labour process theory assumes management has a control imperative in its organisation of production relations:

- the capitalist imperative to transform labour power into actual output supported by the commodification of labour;
- the centrality of the capital-labour relationship in analysis;
- the capitalist logic of accumulation which is seen to inspire the continuous revolution of the production process;
- the control imperative of capital over labour;
- the inherently antagonistic social relations of production, modified by the dual-sided nature of the employment relationship, which accommodates notions of consent and cooperation.

P.K. Edwards (1990:125), however, argued that labour process theory has tended to juxtapose managerial control with worker resistance to that control126. This focus has led to a neglect of the range of motivations and

126 This is an important criticism of labour process theory, however, notwithstanding the problems associated with giving the initiation and implementation of managerial controls too large an emphasis in analysis, it is necessary to acknowledge that controlling the labour process is an important function of management. Management's control strategies, though, are often applied in an ad hoc manner and, when assessing them, it is not always possible to "infer a strategic intention from a particular form of
responses present in the experience of work: "workers have some part in creating patterns of control: they are not passive recipients of managerial actions" (P.K. Edwards, 1986:279). Nonetheless, assessing workers' responses to management control is a good starting point to discover the degree to which workers do play a part in creating those patterns of control. By examining workers' professed consent and legitimation behaviours and attitudes to control, it is possible to contribute to an understanding of those motivations and responses. This can be achieved while examining legitimation and consent in relation to management control, generally, and management's role in change, in particular.

When critical theorists argued that consent and legitimation to management control was manufactured, either at the level of the firm or in broader societal terms, they were working from an implication that such manufacture was necessary - if relinquishing personal to organisational control was a natural human function, there would be no need to manufacture legitimation and consent. The labour process model would thus seem to suggest that management needs to manufacture worker legitimation and consent in three main areas:

- legitimation and consent to management control;
- legitimation and consent to working with management towards management-defined organisational objectives; and
- legitimation and consent to the organisation's rationale for change.

Critical theories such as that proposed by P.K. Edwards (1986) and advocated by Thompson (1989) would suggest that the workers' role in resisting and responding to management's attempts to manufacture consent should also be included in an analysis which purported to illuminate the complexities of the shopfloor. Investigating legitimation

work organisation or job design" (Littler, 1990:52). Nonetheless, this thesis assumes that management is desirous of controlling the process and outcomes of organisational change, that they have in their armoury various strategies designed to elicit worker consent to and legitimation of the changes, and that these strategies are governed by managerial ideologies which "seek to secure a basic level of consent to managerial rule among employees by persuading them of the organisational necessity of the managerial function and of the legitimacy of managerial authority" (Couchman, 1990:37). Given the high-commitment type of organisational change which is sought in Australia today, this is a valid assumption and labour process theory provides an adequate theoretical base from which to conduct investigations into what Littler (1990:65) termed the "fractured interplay of control, consensus and bargaining".
and consent behaviours and attitudes, then, need not only give information about how workers resist - it should indicate some positive desire for control, to uphold the opinion that such manufacture does indeed need to occur. As the job could be seen as the first place an worker might be able to exercise control, workers' responses to a range of contextual variables were analysed to offer specific information about workers' desire to have some control over their jobs as expressed by their consent and legitimation statements in the theoretical questionnaire. (These contextual variables will be discussed at the end of this chapter).

Similarly, the need for management to act to secure legitimation and consent to the organisation's purpose would not exist if workers shared management orientations about their role in the organisation, the goals which the organisation should reach and how everyone should go about reaching those objectives. Management in these circumstances would not have to intervene in some way to manipulate workers into a sense of common purpose. In management's ideal world, management and workers would be working towards the same, managerially-defined, goals. Again, information from interview data about contextual variables was used to give practical examples of the notion of common purpose in terms of consent and legitimation responses and to see whether workers felt that they and management were working towards the same goals.

THE CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND TO THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

Hogarth indicated the relevance of legitimation and consent at the shop floor level:

Despite the emergence of flat management structure ideologies, the nature of authority within an organisation is typically hierarchical and pyramidal. Depending upon how well the boundaries are delineated between each layer in the pyramid, conflict (or co-operation) will result when subordinate layers are directed in their actions...Where conflict results this does not necessarily indicate that the legitimacy of authority in total is being rejected, rather a specific aspect in a particular circumstance and context. Though workers accept the
legitimacy of management authority, insofar as management are recognised as having the responsibility for ensuring that the production process operates to a standard which will ensure the survival of the workplace, workers will have secured rights and areas of worker autonomy. Periodically, management will attempt to change the rules and conventions governing the organisation of work and where this intrudes upon areas of worker autonomy management’s legitimacy is likely to be questioned. (Hogarth, 1993:193).

Thus, workers could legitimise general notions about the right of management to control the labour process, but resist or refuse to comply with, particular rules or instructions. Similarly, workers could cooperate with particular management strategies even if they did not legitimise management’s role in their development or implementation - particularly if the worker believed it to be in his/her best interest. Given the combination of consent and legitimation behaviours and attitudes which could be posited, a four-way theoretical grid was constructed to direct the empirical research:

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<tr>
<th>Granting Consent and Legitimation</th>
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<td>Withholding Consent and Granting Legitimation</td>
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Diagram 3.1: Granting And Withholding Legitimation And Consent.

The first task of this thesis was to operationalise the concepts and locate them on the theoretical grid to provide the basis for the survey instrument which would initiate empirical inquiries.
Operationalisation Of Legitimation And Consent

Legitimation and consent, in common with many other social science concepts, are dispositional rather than directly observable, in that they refer to “a tendency to act in a particular way under certain conditions” (Bulmer and Burgess, 1986:249). Nonetheless, it is possible that they may be stated in terms of “particular empirical observations” (Bulmer and Burgess, 1986:257-258). Ideally, in measuring attitudes or behaviours on a particular scale, it is desirable to use a standard instrument (De Vaus, 1991:53). Unfortunately, no such standard measure was available to measure either consent or legitimation in the employment relationship and the concepts were often not specifically operationalised in the theoretical literature (P.K Edwards, 1986:56; Thompson, 1989:177). Operationalisation to empirically examine consent and legitimation was therefore problematic. De Vaus (ibid) suggests that, if no standard measure is available, concepts be inductively operationalised via observation and unstructured interview, or through discussions with informants. Both of these approaches are sound, but there is another which can tap into a wider range of experience than that available to a single researcher in a relatively isolated environment.

In order to establish useful constructs of legitimation and consent, a review of empirical and theoretical literature was conducted to establish typologies of behaviour which seemed to fit the definitions outlined earlier. Although not drawn from case studies which were designed to study these particular concepts, there was a wide range of behaviours and attitudes reported in empirical work which seemed to accord quite neatly with the chosen definitions. The major benefit of relying upon empirical studies for this task was the ability of the researcher to be relatively inductive in establishing operational definitions of the concepts, yet developing a survey instrument cheaply and within a reasonable timeframe; the major limitation being the interpretations which were brought to bear on the work of other researchers, which had been designed for a different purpose.

Notwithstanding this limitation, the review of the empirical literature provided extensive behavioural and attitudinal constructs which were able to form the basis of further, targeted, research. The studies which
were used came from both critical and management theory. They included P.K. Edwards' (1986) consideration of shop-floor conflict and the earlier work he had undertaken with Hugh Scullion (1984) in an engineering factory; Ashforth and Lee's (1990) examination of defensive behaviour in organisations; Castle, Markey and Bourne's (1989) thorough analysis of steelworkers' attitudes to change; Storey's (1980) analysis of technological change in an office; Bowles and Lewis' (1988) study of the banking industry; Knights and Morgan's (1990) study of the labour process in the life insurance industry; and Fenwick and Olson's (1986) analysis of workers' support for participation. That which follows locates the constructs upon the theoretical grid, indicating, where appropriate, both the source of the construct and the item which tests the response in the Theoretical Questionnaire (Appendix One). Not all posited constructs are drawn from existing theory, and these appear in the text as unsourced.

Granting Consent and Legitimation

Operationalising how the worker consents to and legitimises management control.

- Acceptance of a quality imperative. If the worker accepts the notion of quality and management then predicates changes on the basis of quality standards, the changes are also consented to and legitimated (P.K. Edwards, 1986:236). [Question 1].

- The worker has a stated commitment to the goals of the organisation (Argyle, 1984:4). The worker thus legitimates and consents to working towards goals which management has defined. [Question 11].

- The worker's use and acceptance of procedure manuals (Storey, 1980:68). This has been adapted to assess whether workers consent to and legitimate the need for a range of managerial rules and procedures. [Question 14].

- The worker's internalisation of the company's rationale for changes as beneficial (Bowles and Lewis, 1988:64-65). The worker thus consents to and legitimises management's reasons for the change and agrees that the outcomes will be beneficial overall. [Question 6].
• The worker's acceptance that management and workers have a commonality of interests (Fenwick and Olson, 1986:509). The worker thus consents to and legitimises the idea that the worker's and the company's fortunes are linked. [Questions 2, 12 and 16].

• The worker's acceptance that powerlessness is part of working life (Ashforth, 1989:213). The worker consents to and legitimises the power differential between management and labour and the hierarchy of control which that differential implies. [Question 3].

• Internalisation of the idea of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay which influences the worker's standard of both effort and reward (Hyman, 1989:21), but which Hyman (1989:49) considers usually reflects the interests of management. [Question 17].

• A sense of 'trust' experienced by lower-level employees (Hyman, 1989:34). The worker consents to and legitimises management's role in determining the tasks and objectives which the worker can then be 'trusted' to meet. [Question 4].

• Striving for sales success in industries with competitive sales targets (Knights and Morgan, 1990:373). This has been adapted to assess the worker's consent to and legitimation of management's performance standards by asking workers whether they constantly strive for better performance. [Question 13].

• The worker's assessment of management's handling of the change process. This question seeks to establish whether the worker consents to and legitimates management's role in the change process by assessing whether the worker perceives that they would have acted similarly if they were in management's position. [Question 5].

• The perceived need for strong leadership in the organisation. This question asks whether workers consent to and legitimise management's role in directing organisational activities towards management objectives. [Question 18].
Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation

Operationalising how the worker consents to control without legitimating management's right to control particular aspects of the labour process. The worker, while adhering to the letter of the law, will usually find ways to adapt its intention to his or her advantage.

- The worker has strong expectations of and the desire for job control (Ashforth, 1989:214). The worker consents to his/her role in performing defined tasks, but how they are performed lies in the decision-making domain of the worker, not management. Management involvement in the minutiae of the job is not legitimated. [Questions 9, 10, 15].

- The worker manipulates time to the workforce advantage (P.K. Edwards, 1986:252). The worker consents to the performance of allocated tasks, but will use his/her discretion as to when it is performed, or by whom - not always legitimating management's role in this determination. [Question 8].

- Frustrated compliance with the hierarchical authority. The worker's frustration with the control system manifests itself in a lack of initiative (Storey, 1980:101). The worker consents to what is required by the control system, but does not legitimize the intrusion into his/her self-determination at work. Thus, over time, the worker does just what is required, and no more. S/he is not proactive in reaching organisational goals through innovative means. [Question 19].

Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent

Operationalising how workers generally legitimise management's right to control, but do not consent to all particularities.

- Workers are prepared to go out in support of other workers (Hyman, 1989:30). This question has been adapted to establish whether a worker would be willing to give support to other workers in times of perceived need, though this may not result in a strike. The worker generally legitimises the role of management in determining the role of workers in the organisation but, in certain circumstances, s/he will
act to support another worker who is adversely affected by a management decision. [Question 29].

- Working to rule (Ashforth and Lee, 1990:632). The worker legitimates management's right to establish workplace rules and procedures. If the worker does not agree with management's actions in a particular circumstance, one way s/he can express that lack of consent is in adhering to the very letter of the law, thus often slowing down the work process while still doing all that is required. [Question 25].

- Following instructions and cooperating at work, but with the intention to quit if another job comes up. [Question 26]. Turnover, particularly if the person then intends to go to a similar type of work in another firm (P.K. Edwards, 1986:257). [Question 35]. Both these questions assess the situation where the worker legitimates the role of management generally and does not seek to change the existing control system; the worker merely wishes to substitute this particular brand of control for that in another firm.

- Bending rules in order to work faster or better (Castle, et al, 1989:318). In this case, the worker legitimates the objectives of the organisation, but does not consent to the rules which management has established to meet them. The worker believes that, by not consenting to particular rules, s/he is better able to facilitate the achievement of legitimate organisational objectives. [Question 22].

- Grumbling about certain undesirable conditions of work, but with a view that these problems are inevitable (P.K. Edwards, 1986:230). The worker legitimates the hierarchical structures and managerial role and does not seek to change either, but nonetheless will withdraw his/her consent from particular acts, seeing them as problems to be overcome, while continuing to legitimate the whole [Question 20]. Similarly, the worker might not consent to management's unpredictability but will expect that it is a fact of organisational life that they will keep changing tack [Question 36].
• Absenteeism (P.K. Edwards, 1986:256), which can be a response to a control system without actually being a challenge to it (P.K Edwards and Scullion, 1984:561). [Question 21].

• The worker intends to dispute a takeover of traditional duties. In this situation, the worker legitimates management's role in determining the division of labour in the first instance but does not consent to an arbitrary reallocation of that task distribution. [Question 27].

Withholding Consent and Legitimation

Operationalising how workers neither consent to nor legitimise management control. It is necessary, though, to make a significant assumption here in order that the analysis be rendered credible. Thus, this category assumes that because workers are located in a mixed economy, they will have a certain normative acceptance of the need to be employed per se. That is to say, there is a perceived need to work, partly for purely economic reasons, but also partly to prevent marginalisation in their society. Moreover, the fact that workers do not constantly withdraw labour power assumes there is some kind of comfort zone wherein management control is accorded some legitimacy. Nonetheless, it is assumed that there is a boundary beyond which the workers will not tolerate an incursion of management control, and it is this area in which consent and legitimation can be withheld.

• Militant individualism which can take the form individual bargaining at the shop floor level over the work organisation or the piece rate (P.K. Edwards, 1986:231-232). The worker therefore does not legitimate or consent to management's treatment of the worker as incapable of determining his/her appropriate effort level [Question 33] or the worker's inability to make appropriate work-related decisions [Question 30].

• Stalling - particularly with respect to the implementation of policy which does not meet with the worker's approval (Ashforth and Lee, 1990:626). The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's role in designing changes which have adverse job impacts or which workers think are a waste of time to implement. [Questions 7, 23, 28, and 31].
• Desire for worker participation initiatives (Fenwick and Olson, 1986:506). The worker does not consent to or legitimate the role of management in being the sole architect of changes which are going to impact on the organisation as a whole and the worker's job in particular. [Question 24].

• Adherence to professional group or craft principles in preference to obeying management instructions (Hyman, 1989:33). The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's role in determining how the job should now be performed. [Question 34].

The constructs, having been operationalised, can be diagrammatically represented as illustrated in Diagram 3.2.

This concludes the explication of the constructs in terms of legitimation and consent attitudes and behaviours, and the theoretical grid now requires a further location within the theoretical context of critical inquiry about the labour process. It is reasonable to assume that management would seek to impress upon workers the legitimacy of their rationale for change. As was seen in Chapter One, the type of involvement in change which Australian companies are seeking from employees assumes a level of commitment which could not be attained if workers did not accept the rationale for change. As the forthcoming data will show, the organisation's need to be competitive and efficient is accorded considerable legitimacy by workers - an indication of the breadth of acceptance these rationales have received in the workplace. The contextual information from interviews with workers explored this legitimacy and its source.
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<td>• Acceptance of quality imperative</td>
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<td>• Commitment to organisational goals</td>
<td>• Manipulation of time to the workforce's advantage</td>
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<td>• Perceiving benefits in change</td>
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<td>• Acceptance of worker powerlessness</td>
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<td>• Perceiving a need for strong leadership</td>
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<td>• Experiencing a sense of trust</td>
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<td>• Striving for better performance</td>
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<th>Withholding Consent and Granting Legitimation</th>
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<td>• Support for other workers</td>
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<td>• Working to rule</td>
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<td>• Intending to quit</td>
<td>• Stalling or non-implementation of changes</td>
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<td>• Absenteeism</td>
<td>• Adherence to craft or professional principles, or traditional ways of working, in preference to management instructions</td>
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<td>• Bending rules to work faster or better</td>
<td>• Desiring worker participation in change</td>
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<td>• Acceptance of work problems as inevitable</td>
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Diagram 3.2: Worker Consent and Legitimation: Locating the Constructs on the Theoretical Grid.

THE CONTEXT OF THE ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE EXPERIENCE

It has already been argued that, without a discussion of objective features of work organisation, the analysis of the individual experience of organisational change becomes merely an exercise in context-free subjectivity. The following empirical investigations locate the experience
of organisational change within the broader context identified by Salaman (1979:10) of "the nature of society and the contribution of organisations to its maintenance and development". Although the focus is on individual experiences of organisational change, those individuals are located in a political context - within the organisation itself and as members of a proletarianised society, with the limited occupational choices that entails. Thus, one of the overriding assumptions made by the present research is that individuals approached the survey interview as workers - not merely as personalities - and gave their answers from the perspective of their own, personal working experiences. The workers' experiences of organisational change have been discussed with reference to the particular historical and economic context of the organisation or industry in which they are located, and their attitudes to legitimation and consent were analysed in relation to a wide range of background variables. The background information which was gathered from respondents was comprehensive, and comprised inquiries about

- demographics;
- satisfaction with the process and outcomes of change;
- evaluation of the impact of change on the worker's job;
- perceptions of the extent of the changes;
- perceptions of the change imperatives; and
- the effect of the changes on attitudes to work. (A sample Background Questionnaire is included in Appendix Two).

**CONCLUSION**

As Salaman observed, organisations are "important both for what they do, and for what they fail to do". It is a fact of the human experience of proletarianised life that many hours of each day are spent within formal organisational structures. Thus, the organisational experience is a relevant one for human society, but it is not one which can be informed merely by long theorising. Rather, a conceptual understanding of the nature and outcomes of organisational experience is necessary to appreciate the consequences and impact of organisational life.
Existing terminology is difficult to employ...terms such as compliance and consent have a range of meanings. It follows...that precise definitions will not help....The solution is to see employees' commitment, consent, or compliance as the product of the social relations of production and not as a distinct 'thing'...[F]orms of co-operation and accommodation have to be understood in context. (P.K. Edwards, 1986:56).

This chapter has operationalised the concepts of legitimation and consent and suggested that they be examined in conjunction with the contextual features of organisational change in order to gain a fuller understanding of individual experiences. Thus, the researcher must visit the shop floor and engage in dialogue with the subjects of the labour process. The means by which this researcher undertook the process of empirical research is outlined in the following chapter.
THE Aims of this research was to answer the question, "how do workers objectively and subjectively experience organisational change?" The research question seems exploratory, seeking to illuminate the phenomena associated with organisational change from the workers' perspective. Yet there is an explanatory dimension to this research question, as it is proposed to investigate these experiences within a critical framework of sociological inquiry - with all the inherent assumptions that includes. In addressing this question, there are a number of judgements which must be made about the appropriate way to collect and analyse the data flows from the process of seeking further information. As Mills (1959:67) so eloquently stated: "Any style of empiricism involves a metaphysical choice - a choice as to what is most real".

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The aim of research design is to choose a research method which will allow confidence in the interpretations made from the data (Stone, 1987:87) and to select a method which best answers the type of question posed, without allowing the methodology to "determine the problem" (Mills, 1959:57). The social scientist has a difficult task in achieving these objectives; a great deal of human behaviour is unrelated to a motivated desire for a particular outcome, yet an explanation for the phenomena preceding and following from human action is the central task of social science (Nagel, 1971:482). Providing such explanation is further complicated, as Weber noted in the early years of this century, by the fact that "all research is contaminated by the values of the researcher" (Silverman and Gubrium, 1989:1).
Research Assumptions

In order to consider the individual experience of change from a theoretical as well as an empirical standpoint, it is necessary to assess the nature of the individual experience of reality - the ontological question. The basic ontological question is "whether the 'reality' to be investigated is external to the individual...whether 'reality' is of an 'objective' nature, or the product of individual cognition; whether 'reality' is a given 'out there' in the world, or the product of one's mind" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:1). The literature review has established that the theoretical perspectives on organisation generally distinguish between the subjective and objective ontologies. The distinction between the two views is a metaphysical and, arguably, an unrealistic one. The research design in this study is based on the ontological assumption that workers do have a subjective understanding of reality, but that there also exists an objective dimension (Durkheim's social facts) which influences their subjective interpretations, but whose effects may be interpreted according to personality-based subjective factors.\(^{127}\)

Epistemological assumptions similarly influence researchers' perceptions of current and future behaviour. Epistemological assumptions refer to the way in which knowledge is gained, for example either by acquisition or experience, and communicated - whether knowledge is facts or personal insight. Where the physical sciences concentrate on what is unknown, the social sciences have long considered the epistemological problem - that which is known (Mead, 1938:26). The present study assumes that workers' perceptions of their own experience of organisational change constitute warrantable knowledge, but that the understanding of these perceptions can be increased by reference to existing theoretical constructs. In addition to ontological and epistemological assumptions, researchers also make assumptions about human nature which encompass the relationship between people and their society. People may be assumed to respond in a deterministic way to

\(^{127}\) It must be said, though, that the dimensions of these personality traits are not explored in this study. However, it will be seen that individuals interpret the same events differently. Past and present experience cannot account for all the difference in interpretation. Nature, as well as nurture, must play some role. The study, though, is not designed to explore the mysteries of the human mind and, indeed, considerable understanding of the individual experience of change is available without psychological analysis, as this study will show.
their environment; they may be viewed as creators of the environment in which they live and work; or, more likely, they are assumed to relate both voluntarily and deterministically with their environment (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:1-2), as is the assumption in the current study.

The methodological assumptions made by social scientists are very firmly linked to the assumptions made about human nature, epistemology and ontology. Essentially, the philosophical debate underlying the arguments about qualitative or quantitative research methods is concentrated upon one point: Are research methods which derive from their applicability to the natural world appropriate to the study of people? Where they started as descriptions of ways to gather data, qualitative and quantitative research methods had, by the 1970s, come to "denote divergent assumptions about the nature and purposes of research in the social sciences" (Bryman, 1988:3). Burrell and Morgan (1979:3) elaborate:

If one subscribes to a view...which treats the social world as if it were a hard, external, objective reality, then the scientific endeavour is likely to focus upon an analysis of relationships and regularities between the various elements which it comprises...The methodological issues of importance are thus the concepts themselves, their measurement and the identification of underlying themes. This perspective expresses itself most forcefully in a search for universal laws which explain and govern the reality which is being observed.

If one subscribes to the alternative view of social reality, which stresses the importance of the subjective experience of individuals in the creation of the social world, then the...principal concern is with an understanding of the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world in which he or she finds himself. The emphasis in extreme cases tends to be placed upon the explanation and understanding of what is unique and particular to the individual rather than of what is general and universal.

The first paragraph describes the quantitative and the second paragraph the qualitative approaches to social research. Yet the approaches need not be mutually exclusive. Combining qualitative and quantitative data has been seen (Laurie and Sullivan, 1991:113) to provide a broad theoretical
perspective which contributes to a wider examination of issues than a quantitative study alone would provide to certain topics - allowing the actors' accounts and the meanings they attach to their own situation to be of prime importance (Laurie and Sullivan, 1991:123). This study uses both quantitative and qualitative data to contribute to that wider understanding of the issues.

A Case Study Approach

Case studies can involve both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques and collection methods (Yin, 1981:58-59) and the case study was the research method of choice in this instance. The case study approach derives its theoretical legitimacy from Weber's notion that social analysis must proceed from the premise that analysis of events should be understood in the terms of those who are taking the action (Sutcliffe, 1991:82). The phenomenon of the case study in the social sciences derived from those used in social work (Platt, 1992:19), psychology and medicine (Eckstein, 1975:81). As a method for social science research, the case study was first popularised in the 1920s and by the 1940s two central problems with the method had emerged: Difficulty in replication and comparability arising from a lack of objectivity128, and the difficulty in generalising from a specific case to the wider population129 (Platt, 1992:21-22). Yin addressed these criticisms in 1981, when he exhorted the case study researcher to

preserve a chain of evidence as each analytic step is conducted. The chain of evidence consists of the explicit citation of particular pieces of evidence, as one shifts from data collection to within-case analysis to cross-case analysis and to overall findings and conclusions. (Yin, 1981:63, original emphasis).

Platt (1992:45) saw this approach as a crucial break with the qualitative, inductive approaches traditionally associated with case studies concerned

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128 Objectivity in social research is measured on the basis of reliability and validity (Kirk and Miller, 1986:19), which will be discussed shortly.
129 Batstone, Ferner and Terry, for example, were criticised for Consent and Efficiency because, like other organisational studies, the theory retained "so much of the complexity of reality and contextual circumstances, as to make broader generalizations and theoretical understanding more or less futile" (von Otter, 1987:136).
with "access to personal meanings". Indeed, Yin (1992:128) does advocate the deductive approach to case study research, but he also considers the context as essential to the phenomena under investigation. "As a research strategy, the distinguishing characteristic of the case study is that it attempts to examine: (a) a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when (b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1981:59, original emphasis), and "in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1992:123). The case study has the ability to provide a research method which is congruent with a desire to obtain increased understanding (Weber's notion of Verstehen) "rather than on a search for causal explanations" (Gummesson, 1991:75).

By 'dirtying their hands', researchers who go into the workplace may come to better understand the context in which particular events occur. (Sutcliffe, 1991:81).

It is argued here that the phenomena of workers' experiences of organisational change are appropriately researched with a case study approach because the context of their experience is essential to their understanding of it and response to it; and the expectations associated with the process and outcomes of organisational change are a product of previous work and social experience as much as personality, so obscuring the boundaries between phenomenon and context. The need to consider the context in which the person, as worker, experiences change is highlighted below, so it suffices to say at this stage that the case studies in the present research serve to locate workers' experiences of organisational change within four main contexts - a manufacturing firm, a public sector organisation, a mining process operational site, and on the waterfront.

**Individuals As The Units Of Analysis**

The literature review pointed to the limitations of the theoretical perspectives on individuals in organisations, so it is not necessary to cover that ground in too much detail here. Suffice to say that the majority of mainstream studies into organisational behaviour and experience have used the individual as the unit of analysis, considering
"each individual observation as independent. Because the focus is on the individual, attention is given to individual-level variables such as demographics, needs and attitudes. The effects of more inclusive variables such as the normative context as well as the technology, economic conditions and so forth that might affect individual reactions to work are often neglected. (Pfeffer, 1982:17-18).

This is a significant area of neglect as employing organisations have an effect on individual behaviour even prior to entry, as "we know from past experience what patterns of behaviour are expected in varying circumstances" (Gergen, 1974:83). Indeed, "part of the psychological contract when one joins an organization is that some freedom to enact is traded for wages and benefits" (Weick, 1979:239). Thus, the worker is more than an individual personality, s/he is a person who is situated within a socially constructed world, though it can be argued that the reaction to this world is not completely determined by the circumstances of the experience. Foucault's point that "we should hear the voices in the local and specific situations, that we should attend to the specific situations rather than be seeking a sovereign power that orchestrates these situations" (Clegg, 1994:5) is another justification for exploring the individual experience in organisations,¹³⁰ which have delivered such memorable case studies of the working experience as Beynon's (1973) *Working for Ford*, Burawoy's (1979) *Manufacturing Consent*, Kamata's (1984) *Japan in the Passing Lane* and Westwood's (1984) *All Day Every Day*, for example. Clearly, though, "forces external to the workplace should not be wholly disregarded" (Hogarth, 1993:193), and by locating the experiences of individual workers within the socio-politico-economic context of the firm in a capitalist society, the extent of the shared experience of change can be assessed more accurately; and the depth of our understanding of legitimation and consent as manufactured and reproduced processes can be increased.

¹³⁰ The notion of a sovereign power is that power "is attributed to some sovereign subject or agency. If the theorist is a Marxist, it is the capitalist class. If they are elitist theorists, it is a ruling elite" (Clegg, 1994:4) and so on.
The Sample

The main objective in site selection is to achieve a data-set which will allow theoretical replication (Benbasat, Goldstein and Mead, 1987:373). To this end, all organisations chosen had recently undergone a restructuring process. Seven firms in four industries were chosen as the general population from which to select the sample. The sampling technique of choice in this instance was quota sampling. The purpose of quota sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, is to select cases which fit certain criteria (de Vaus, 1991:78). The objective of the case studies was to assess workers' experiences of change, so the sample attempted to include respondents from various levels of the hierarchy, excluding management. Within the quota sample, as many of the available workforce as feasible were interviewed in an attempt to provide as broad a range of experience as possible. Management were interviewed as one source of contextual information about the firm and industry, but they were not included as subjects in the survey.

Gaining Access

Access to sites and then to workers is always problematic for the researcher, particularly in times of increased competitiveness in industry when the intensity of work is heightened131, and this study was denied access by one large public sector employer. All other organisations which were approached - first by telephone call to the CEO, then by letter and appointment - agreed to be included in the research. Where the firm was unionised, the union was approached concurrent with permission being sought from the CEO. A letter, detailing the purpose and administration of the study, was prepared (sample attached as Appendix Three) and circulated either to all employees or placed on a notice-board which was frequently attended by workers. Workers were not required to participate in the study - any involvement was voluntary. (Only one person who

131 There are also a number of other reasons why a firm might be reluctant to allow research access to employees during times of organisational change, including management's fear of further destabilising the workforce by questions which workers may perceive as threatening in the current climate and the public airing of disenchantment towards management which could be expected from many change processes.
was approached categorically declined to be interviewed. Most were willing, though some were initially suspicious, participants).

The Respondents
The final sample included 161 workers from the following sites:

- Fincor.
  Forty-six clerical public servants of various hierarchical levels were surveyed (the entire non-managerial workforce, barring one worker who did not wish to participate).

- The Waterfront.
  The Waterfront sample contained 50 workers from the four major employers on the Fremantle waterfront - three stevedoring companies and the State Government’s container unpacking and maintenance depots. Although there were slight variations in management approach to controlling the labour process, the changes the workers had experienced had all been engineered by the Federal Government’s Waterfront Industry Reform Authority. Prior to the restructuring, employment conditions on the waterfront had meant that workers floated around between different employers according to demand, so there was enough common experience across employment groups to justify treating the workers as individuals in similar circumstances, with similar background employment experiences.

- MineCo.
  The MineCo sample contained Operators and Team Leaders from one of the company’s processing sites. Thirty seven workers were surveyed.

- Popco.
  Twenty-eight operations-level workers, including Tradespersons and Maintainers, from this manufacturing company were surveyed.

With the exception of the Fincor sample, all workers surveyed were male.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality requirements were dealt with in the following ways:
• Firms were told at the outset that they would be identified by pseudonym only; one of the main reasons being that workers' opinions and beliefs, with their inherent biases, were the subject of study rather than 'factual truths'.
• Workers were assured that any information reported back to the organisation would be in aggregate form, with absolutely no identifiable content, and that any published material would obscure the worker's identity (to the extent that identifiable anecdotes would not be used).
• Interviews were held in surroundings conducive to maintaining confidentiality, and surveys were kept in a locked briefcase at all times, then stored at the university.
• Permission was sought from each worker to make extensive notes throughout the interviews.
• Respondents were given a code-number by which they could be identified and, although first names were used in the interview situation, they were changed for publication purposes. The employing organisation did not have access to the identifying codes.

The particular means of obtaining access and details of the sample selection in each case is detailed in the case studies, but some general comments can be made about the interviewing technique and situation.

THE RESEARCH METHODS

The Social Survey

Using a case study approach to locate individual workers within an organisational context, the main research technique used in the present study was the survey. Bulmer (1984:54) categorised the descriptive survey as being

designed to portray accurately the characteristics of particular individuals, situations or groups (in terms of behaviour, attitudes and dispositions to act), and to determine the frequency with which such behaviour or attitudes occur in the population being sampled.
There may be some danger attached to identifying a survey as descriptive, rather than analytic as Bulmer's (1984:54) outline of the analytic survey seems to imply a more rigorous, scientific approach to knowledge.

Analytic surveys are concerned to test hypotheses about the relationships between variables in order to understand and explain a particular social phenomenon.

To say that a research design should consider these two approaches to be mutually exclusive seems to be limiting the researcher's ability to combine the best of all methods which seek to illuminate a particular question.

An approach to an increased, required level of plausibility should be based...on the use of the method or methods best suited to the socially structured necessities of the sociologist's research situation. (Glaser and Strauss, 1970:299).

It cannot be assumed that a piece of research is objective simply because that is the researcher's aim. The cognitive idiosyncrasies of the researcher are important in qualitative research because their theories include "not only academic commitments but also values, behavioural style, and experience" (Kirk and Miller, 1986:51).132 The research world is as complex as the social world and, indeed, is a product of and a contributor to it. Just as qualitative research, according to Kirk and Miller (1986:10), implies a commitment to field research without implying a commitment to innumeracy, so one should be able to argue for an amalgamation of the descriptive and analytic approaches to the survey. The present research outlined a set of general questions at the outset (Bulmer, 1984:59) which were designed to direct the inquiries, but these questions were supplemented by in-depth interviewing which allowed respondents to participate in the direction taken by the research. Hypotheses were not developed to test the relationship between variables, but the theoretical concepts of legitimation and consent were operationalised to establish a theoretical basis from which to begin inquiries, and the context within which workers experienced organisational change was explored via a

132 In some ways, this thesis has dealt throughout with this issue - showing how the various approaches to organisational analysis contradict each other on the basis of assumptions about the role of workers and management in the production process.
series of questions derived from a theoretical consideration of the labour process.

**Issues of Validity and Reliability**

Regardless of the instrument or approach used, however, one of the overriding considerations of social research is its objectivity - its ability to draw reliable and valid conclusions from the data which is collected. According to Deutscher,

the concept of validity addresses itself to the truth of an assertion that is made about something in the empirical world. The concept of reliability, on the other hand, concentrates on the degree of consistency in the observations obtained from the devices we employ: interviewers, schedules, tests, documents, observers, informants. (Deutscher, 1970:202).

**Validity Issues**

There are three main validity issues which must be considered in relation to the survey instrument which purports to assess consent and legitimation (the Theoretical Questionnaire): Theoretical and apparent validity and the use of hypothetical statements. Validity becomes problematic when instruments are used to estimate hypothetical behaviour (Deutscher, 1970:213). In the Theoretical Questionnaire, questions were drawn from empirical studies which described actual behaviour and were generally limited to statements about past or current behaviour or attitudes, though four out of the thirty six questions contained hypothetical statements.

Theoretical, or construct, validity refers to the degree to which "the theoretical paradigm rightly corresponds to observations" (Kirk and Miller, 1986:22). The scales used in this study were developed by establishing theoretical definitions of legitimation and consent based on a review of the literature, and then compiling operational constructs based on empirical observations by other researchers in the field. The theoretical validity of the instrument, though, is compromised by the interpretation brought to bear on findings which were not designed for the same purpose; a fact which means that only cautious conclusions can be drawn from it. Yet, even if the theoretical validity could be established as of a high standard, it would be unwise to declare that one's conclusions
accurately represent the empirical phenomena without other supporting evidence (Deutscher, 1970:203-204).

Instrumental, or criterion, validity refers to the degree to which a measurement procedure provides observations that "match those generated by an alternative procedure that is itself accepted as valid" (Kirk and Miller, 1986:22). In this case, a Likert scale was chosen as the vehicle to represent the constructs to the respondents. In order to use an original Likert scale, it is necessary to build an item pool which adequately measures the constructs under examination - an issue which has been discussed above. Although it has its faults, a Likert scale does serve to split people into rough groups and thus seems appropriate for the typological data associated with this research. Moreover, the strength of a response is obtainable (Oppenheim, 1966:138-141) and this may prove useful in determining future research.

It is also an important issue of validity that respondents have some knowledge about why they are being asked certain questions; this is a particular problem associated with the use of closed questions, as in the Theoretical Questionnaire. If respondents are to interpret a question in the same way they must give the same meaning to key words. Yet even when they have done this, respondents seldom interpret questions literally...the fact that every respondent has been exposed to the same words is no guarantee that they will have understood the question in the same way. (Foddy, 1993:140).

In order to mitigate these problems, the following strategies were employed:

• Each interviewee was given a brief summary about the desire to understand organisational change from the workers' perspective, since academic researchers didn't always go out and discover how workers felt about what was happening.

• The next step was to ask the worker generally, in conversation, what type of work they did and to describe the changes that they had noticed in their workplace in the past couple of years.

• Then, the interview was commenced using the Background Questionnaire. By the end of this interview, workers were...
comfortable with thinking about their experience of organisational change.

- At this point, the workers were asked to complete the Theoretical Questionnaire. They were encouraged to ask for clarification if they did not understand the sense of a question and, although ambiguity of meaning and response cannot be entirely ruled out, it is reasonable to assume that the quality of response was increased by eliciting these views after the main interview, where many of the key issues had been covered.

**Reliability Issues**

Reliability is the other side of the objectivity equation and it, too, is problematic - often for no less a reason than the "cussedness" of research subjects who make social science reliability difficult to attain, and the source of the unreliability difficult to identify (Deutscher, 1970:202). Indeed, it has been noted that there is often a gap between respondents' attitudes and self-reported behaviours, with workers maintaining a verbal allegiance to behaviours which an individual may no longer act upon (Nagel, 1971:486). Notwithstanding the difficulty in drawing reliable conclusions from data collected from human subjects, though, there are reliability issues which do not rely upon the nature of the subject in order to be addressed. To have as much confidence as possible in the responses from a survey, the scale developed to measure the constructs must be consistently answered throughout (de Vaus, 1990:240). If the measures are unreliable, they can be a source of error variance (Stone, 1978:90).

De Vaus (1991:55) suggested that the reliability of a survey instrument could be improved by using multiple-item indicators of the concepts; careful wording of the questionnaire; and providing 'don't know' categories for respondents who are not sure how to answer the question. These issues were addressed in the present research in the following way: Multiple-item indicators were developed to measure legitimation and consent. The Theoretical Questionnaire was pre-tested on a group of six hostel workers with similar educational backgrounds to the main survey group - that is, professional and non-professional; and a 'don't know' category was included in the questionnaire. Respondents completed the
Theoretical Questionnaire themselves at the conclusion of the interview associated with the Background Questionnaire.

The Survey Instruments
Two main survey instruments were used - the Theoretical and Background Questionnaires which were discussed in the previous chapter. The Background Questionnaire served the purpose of locating the worker's experience of organisational change within his/her particular workplace. It "fleshed out" the information provided by the Theoretical Questionnaire, but was not used to draw causal connections between variables. This was a deliberate strategy (indeed it would have been easier to justify quantification and hypothesising causal connections than not in the current research climate!) and one which was designed to enable as much accurate information to emerge from the shop floor as possible, without being seduced into explanations of causality. Organisational processes are complex; the relationship between factors in those processes are confounded by a myriad of possible interactions. Although causality has its place in social research, the search for alternative plausible explanations for relationship direction and strength could easily overtake the researcher whose initial aim was to ask the question, "how?" Thomas' (1989) study of employee participation indicated some of the shopfloor complexities which face the researcher who wants to illustrate how theoretical paradigms pan out in reality. The introduction of new strategies, such as participation, as a change effort, immediately creates uncertainty and a struggle for definition among those who are the object of change; [and] will challenge entrenched social relations on the shop floor...[Moreover] the interests of (and therefore the perceived challenges to) workers and managers are not homogeneous but are instead differentiated in important ways...[and] the continuity and durability of relations on the shopfloor are reinforced by the existence of a collective memory among workers and a host of informal agreements which can link workers and supervisors against change efforts. (Thomas, 1989:118).

Jermier (1988:103) also pointed to the importance of understanding what he called the 'deep patterns' of the struggle between control and resistance in organisations in his study of worker sabotage. He concluded that in-depth research was necessary to attempt to understand what happened on
the shop floor as the workers concealed more than they revealed: "Workers protest consistent with their interests, but they usually do so quietly" (Jermier, 1988:120). In similar vein, Laurie and Sullivan have argued persuasively that statistical association of events does not necessarily provide an explanation of why A caused B, even though there is a statistical sequence of outcomes:

For the individual experiencing [an] event the perception or, indeed, actuality may be entirely different, since all such occurrences form part of a much longer process of which the event defined may form perhaps only a small part, and is anyway unlikely to constitute the final moment of that process. (Laurie and Sullivan, 1991:128).

The trade-off against the 'purity' of an experiment or the a priori development of hypotheses, then, was in gaining access to the real-life complexities of the experience of change.

The Interviews

Oppenheim (1992:66-67) proposed that the standardised interview serves the purpose of data collection whereas the depth interview serves to collect ideas. Again, it is possible to combine both of these approaches (without losing the integrity of either), and this study used the standardised Background Questionnaire to form the basis of a series of interviews with individual workers which generally lasted from one to one-and-one-half hours, with questions which required thoughtful answers based on the worker's experience of the labour process in general and changes in particular. The interview itself, as a method of data collection, has some inherent validity problems:

It is naive to assume that biases due to the personality of the interviewer and the nature of the questions asked could be avoided. Each interviewer is somehow stereotyped, and responded to accordingly. (Blum, 1970:87).

Blum noted that many interviewees were prepared to give information only "off the record". Surprisingly, this was not the case in the sample group - though it was a point which was often brought to the particular
attention of interviewees who were making controversial remarks. This frankness can bring up another problem for the interviewer - that of expected agreement. When the issue being discussed is controversial, interviewees often want the interviewer to agree with his/her version of events (Blum, 1970:88). In order to encourage rather than judge the response, phrases like, ”it's good to know how you see these things” were used.

The benefit of a long interview is that it is more likely to elicit better responses from interviewees because it is difficult to “pretend” for any extended period of time. However, the long, and particularly the ‘deep’ interview does require some special conditions to be met if it is to secure “scientifically valid information” (Blum, 1970:88-90):

(1) The researcher must have the trust and confidence of the persons who give the information. (2) He must not only speak their language but he must have a human ability to penetrate a “world” different from his own. (3) He must be highly conscious of psychological dynamics. (Blum, 1970:90).

Notwithstanding the gender limitation implied by Blum’s remarks, the interview in this instance was aided at the beginning by previous work experience as a nurse. This information was given at the outset of the interview, and no doubt contributed to the subjects' confidence in the interviewer's discretion and their willingness to be frank and open in their discussions.

All the interviews were conducted during working hours, in a quiet room somewhere near the shop floor. The organisations were cooperative in allowing this access and it was suggested by a number of respondents in each site that the reason for this was that the sessions were being recorded on the company books as “training”, and thus counted as an expense to offset the lost production time. The truth of these allegations was not established as it seemed impolitic to inquire too deeply into the machinations behind this excellent access for research purposes!
Data Analysis

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques were applied in the present study. Throughout, the descriptive statistics (frequency analysis procedures from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - SPSS) used in the Background Questionnaire were supplemented by anecdotes and quotes from workers on the shop floor and descriptions of the socio-politico-economic context within which the events occurred. Thus, industry and academic journals, newspapers, government reports and interviews with managers and CEOs were used to locate each case of organisational change within its unique context.

In SPSS for Windows Version 6.0, all questions from the Theoretical Questionnaire was analysed to assess the reliability of the scale. At alpha = 0.87, the questionnaire was considered reliable.

The questions in the Background Questionnaire were described by a frequency analysis procedure which initially included all workers and then was segmented by industry group.

A mixture of open and closed questions were used in the interviews associated with the Background Questionnaire. Some of the closed questions prompted dichotomous answers while others were multiple choice, and the open questions often included multiple-choice categories on later versions of the interview schedule to facilitate transcription. Notes, including the transcription of lengthy comments, were taken with the workers' permission during the interviews and the data gained from the schedules were both coded into response categories for frequency analysis, and left in their 'raw' form to provide anecdotal information.

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133 Yin (1981:61) advocates coding responses only after enough data has been gathered to indicate the "meaningful events" in a case study - this overcomes the problem of vast categories of data containing perhaps only one observation. "Obviously, the determination of what is 'meaningful' requires some sense of what the case study is all about", according to Yin, and the decision was taken to include all responses from workers in the data set because it was individual opinions which were considered meaningful in this study. However, there were many common responses to open questions, and the interview schedule was adapted to include common responses (though these were not suggested to workers as alternative answers - the questions were kept open and the codes used simply to facilitate transcription).
A number of data collection and analysis techniques have been used to gain some understanding of how workers experience organisational change. The benefit associated with a range of methodological approaches and techniques within a single project is that it allows the researcher to "tailor their research strategy to the problem at hand" (Bryman, 1988:174) and to enhance the confirmation of results (Denzin, 1970:27). The principal research methods employed in the study were social surveys, via a written Theoretical Questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews using the Background Questionnaire. This data was supplemented by documentary evidence of contextual variables contained in organisational publications, newspapers and academic journals and by verbal discussions with management and unions about the context of change in particular organisations. However, workers were the focal point for the study, and how they experienced change in each of the four industries is documented in the subsequent chapters.
CHAPTER FIVE

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AT FINCOR

We had to get more productivity out of the organisation and get a better structure...

INTRODUCTION

One of the major problems with this type of investigation is the question, "Which change?" Is it the major organisational restructure, or the subsequent devolution of decision-making, or just the adjustments to a job profile which, although minor in organisational terms, may have a considerable impact on an individual's working day? Alas, the answer is "all of the above". Major discontinuous change provides a neater encapsulation for research purposes - causal events are more clearly defined and analysis can be made more parsimonious as a result. However, a study which purports to examine reality in all its complexity must accept that continuous change may also characterise work in this modern age, and its effects must be factored in to any analysis which seeks to illuminate the workplace experience. In terms of the sample, then, it will be noted that there is quite a lot of variation in response rates across questions. This is because, although all questions were put to them, workers only answered those which they felt were applicable to their own situation. To a degree, this makes the analysis less directly comparable but the trade-off for research purposes is the increased confidence that the respondent is speaking from his/her own understanding of what workers personally considered to be meaningful change: Weber and Dilthey's verstehen.

The Fincor case study establishes the reporting format which subsequent cases will follow. Thus, the following chapters will all begin with an outline of the context of organisational change for the particular industry and workplace and will then provide an overview of consent and legitimation responses, together with details of workers' experiences of
change referring to a host of background factors and individual measures. All chapters will conclude the empirical component with workers' evaluation of the changes they experienced before moving to a summary of the theoretical implications of the findings. The measures workers use to evaluate the changes is specific to each case study, being influenced by their particular situation. The present chapter will assess workers' judgements by considering whether the changes met their expectations.

THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE

The Changing Public Sector In Australia

As Thompson (1990:110) indicated, not all employment relations are capitalist; and although management control in the public sector may differ from its private sector equivalent, it is nonetheless present. The need for management control in the public sector has two sources: limited resources and the doctrine of ministerial responsibility. Limited resources acquired from government revenue require public sector managers to demonstrate efficiency and "economy of action", and the doctrine of Ministerial responsibility requires the "predictability of action of appointed officials"; both of which tend to engender control strategies. In both cases, a bureaucratic hierarchy provides the instrument through which control is achieved (Couchman, 1990:36). In recent years, governments have found themselves having to respond to public calls for new or improved services without extending the tax base (Government of Western Australia, 1986:1). The Australian public service had been seen as too rigid (Dawkins, 1985:60; Government of Western Australia, 1986:2), with departments pursuing their own needs without due regard to broader national or state requirements (Aitken and Jinks, 1985:196) and this lack of responsiveness to community need and the government's desire to limit the cost of the sector has translated into a desire for economy and efficiency in the public service, resulting in specific demands being put upon its management functions.

Although the labour-intensiveness of the public service means that labour has to be employed effectively to meet economy requirements, it is
broadly recognised that it is difficult to measure productive output in a sector with no profits (Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration 1976:32; McCallum, 1984:209) and which deals mainly with information and people (Government of Western Australia, 1986:2). Centralised financial accountability has not been successful in achieving objectives economically, so new management systems have been seen as the means by which government's twin goals of efficiency and economy can be met (Government of Western Australia, 1986:8-10).

Efficiency and economy are the most definite aims of public sector reform strategies (Wilenski, 1986:187). In the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration (RCAGA) in 1976, the Commissioners set the expectation for the style of managerialism which would emerge in the public sector over the subsequent two decades. Specifically, the public service should aim for such things as entrepreneurial capacity at various levels; delegated authority as low in the hierarchy as possible; a degree of decision-making discretion at many levels; a two-way flow of information; involvement of staff in determining agency objectives; recruitment, training, organisation and promotion of staff in accordance with those objectives; performance appraisal and accountability; and forward estimates to make efficient use and allocation of resources and to ensure ministerial control (RCAGA, 1976:32-42). Perhaps the broadest aim of reform, though, has been to engender an "ethos of change" into the public administration (Government of Western Australia, 1986:4).

Engendering this ethos of change requires that public service organisations look objectively at their present and future functions and needs and dispassionately and rationally devise a course of action which will lead them to identified objectives which are concurrent with government's desired outcomes. However, although it may be a theoretical feature of bureaucracies that they make rational decisions, it must be noted that bureaucratic decision-making is actually practised within a political system. Thus, there are a range of social, economic and other environmental factors (both internal and external to the organisation) which impact upon the rationality of the decision. Given that organisations are composed of people - individual human beings (Parker, 1975:147) - the bureaucracy could more properly be viewed as a sociological phenomenon than the mechanistic structure of Weber's
model (Ridley, 1972:71). Moreover, even if a bureaucratic decision is made in a reasonably rational manner, with due recourse to information-gathering and identification and assessment of options, at some stage the decision will have to relate the decision outcomes to the bureaucratic value system (Solomon, 1983:438) in order to make a choice between options (Hogwood and Gunn, 1985:46). Decision-making can thus be seen as a social process, relying upon selection throughout. That is to say, it involves selecting not only an alternative solution, but also the initial problem (Robinson, 1968:55).

One of the problem identification and solution techniques which is gaining popular support among public sector managers is Total Quality Management. The introduction of TQM may itself be problematic for, although the operating climate of today's public sector is one which emphasises performance and efficiency in management (Hede, 1991:32), it is not unusual to find that there is little evidence of the value of importing private sector management techniques to the public sector (Bryson, 1991:12). Nor is it surprising that Australian public service managers have shown themselves to be "suckers" for imported management techniques (Hede, 1991:39) - indeed, the 'political' priority of appearing proactive in quality and efficiency initiatives has impacted on the productive priority internationally (Dye, 1990:13).

The Fincor Restructure

Fincor was not immune from these governmental concerns about efficiency and economy and the need for an organisational ethos of change, and the political sensitivity of its functional role necessitated appropriate responses to, and initiatives for, meeting ministerial objectives. Fincor is a small public sector organisation concerned with service delivery to a specialised clientele. The services it provides are financial, advisory and practical. The recession has extended Fincor's client base, making the process of application handling and service

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134 It is impossible to identify Fincor's clientele without compromising the agency's anonymity and, thus, the anonymity of respondents. Withholding this knowledge from the reader should not in any way impair his/her understanding of the issues but, to the extent that it does detract from a broader comprehension, one must stand by one's judgement and render the reader less informed.
delivery a focal point of operations. Marketing surveys in the three years leading up to the restructure which is the subject of this case study indicated that clients expected a more personalised and quicker approach to the assessment of applications and greater emphasis on business and financial management advice (Cole, 1990:6)\textsuperscript{135}. Management was responsive to these needs and, after a lengthy period of planning and replanning, Fincor underwent a comprehensive organisational restructure eight months prior to the investigations which form the basis of this research.

Fincor\textsuperscript{136} was created in the mid-1980s from a specialised section of a large public service department. When first established, Fincor consisted of only six staff, with no hierarchical structure separating management from general staff. The organisation grew fairly slowly in the first few years and a family, all-bog-in-together atmosphere characterised work relations, according to staff who remember this period. Over time, though, and as the worsening economic situation increased their client base, Fincor grew to accommodate increased client demand. The early managers were all technical specialists and this trend of appointment has largely continued. Gradually, as appointments were made from other public service departments and private institutions and the organisation enlarged, a hierarchy developed which has seen the establishment of an executive team of managers. With the formation of the executive team, complaints began to be aired from workers that there was insufficient feedback and acknowledgment from managers. Thus, even though the organisation was quite small (with only 30 staff members), an 'us and them' climate was developing.

Into this climate came a Functional Review Committee (FRC) in the late 1980s. All staff were interviewed during the Review and the FRC Report recommended restructuring the organisation along functional lines. Staff at Fincor tend to view this time as something of a crossroads. It seemed the organisation had the choice to either develop along regional lines, which would effectively reinforce existing power bases, or dissolve

\textsuperscript{135} The reference here is to an original document, embargoed for confidentiality purposes, but available for perusal on request.

\textsuperscript{136} Unless otherwise indicated, the background information supplied here came from interviews with all members of the executive team and such employees who were working in Fincor at the time of the events described.
and reassemble into branches generated along functional lines. The latter path was chosen, in accordance with the findings of the FRC. During its lengthy deliberations about the type of organisational changes which would be made, Fincor management proceeded along a consultative path. Proposals were circulated to workers for their comments and feedback and interviews were held with key organisational figures. But at some point, the decision-making for the real changes became the province of the executive team.

Application handling and service delivery had been previously structured on a regional basis, but the new structure is based along functional lines (see Diagram 5.1, over). This change has caused considerable upheaval in the organisation, as traditional power bases were eroded and a new, potentially powerful alternative was created. The driving force behind the restructure has been the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who has a vision of Fincor occupying a high-profile position in the Western Australian public and industry sectors with a reputation for excellence of service and management. To achieve these objectives, and fuelled by his self-reported ‘devotion’ to Dr W. Edwards Deming and his fourteen point management philosophy, the CEO has introduced a Total Quality Management (TQM) approach to organisational operations concurrent with, and in part justifying, the restructure.

There is a strong focus on the need to improve internal procedures at Fincor, particularly the process of dealing with client applications. In 1989, a team of staff and a senior management facilitator described the current application procedure and suggested ways it could be improved. Only one member of the executive team had read the Report generated by this process and, indeed, its findings were not considered during the restructure as the Report was submitted subsequent to it. At the time of the current research, the application process was undergoing another review but, based on previous experience, workers were not confident that management would implement their suggestions. In the words of one employee, “we must have looked at applications many times, but nothing really changes. Old problems just get looked at in new ways”.

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Diagram 5.1
Pre and Post Structural Change at Fincor

Original Organisational Structure
Fincor

 REVISED CORPORATE STRUCTURE
Fincor

Minister:
Treasurer

Chairman
& Members of
the Board

Chief Executive
Officer

Manager:
Field
Services

Manager:
Industry
Analysis

Manager:
Client
Accounts

Manager:
Outplacement
& Administration

Manager:
Information
Systems

System
Development

User
Support
LEGITIMATION OF AND CONSENT TO CHANGE: THE Finchor Workers' Perspective

Overview Of The Finchor Research Process

Application was made by the researcher to Finchor's CEO to explore workers' experiences of the restructure and any subsequent changes. The initial approach was by letter after inquiries in the public sector had indicated that Finchor was an agency which had recently undergone considerable organisational change and thus might be suitable for the study. In response to the letter, the CEO agreed to discuss the study and, upon interview, gave his full cooperation and support. The manager of the Outplacement and Administration Branch was deputised to introduce the research to workers and a room was provided in which to conduct the interviews. Participation in the study was voluntary, and management were aware that no disaggregated or identifiable feedback would be possible. All interviews at Finchor were conducted in quiet and private surroundings, with due regard to confidentiality considerations. Each interview lasted at least one hour and was conducted during normal working hours. No interruptions were permitted during the interviews, which began with questions from the Background Questionnaire and concluded with the subjects' individually scribing their responses to the Theoretical Questionnaire.

The Finchor Sample

Forty-six workers were interviewed, all bar one of the Finchor workforce. Women were clustered at the lower organisational levels. As shown by Table 5.1, below, there are only three men in Levels 1 and 2, compared to 17 women. While there are 20 men in Levels 3 to 6, there are only four women, none of whom are above Level 4. Considering the males only slightly outnumber the females overall, this is a significant disparity, and one that is heightened by the exclusively male executive team.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION LEVEL</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level One</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Two</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Three</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Four</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Two/Four (effective Level Four- graduate)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Five</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Six</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 46 cases.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Fincor Workers by Sex and Position.

As indicated in Table 5.2, Fincor has an unusual distribution of permanent public service to contract appointments, with twenty employees on permanent staff and twenty-one on contract.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF APPOINTMENT</th>
<th>Number of Workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Public Service</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting Position</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 46 cases.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Fincor Workers by Appointment Type.

Reflecting the number of contract staff, a considerable proportion of the Fincor workforce has had limited service in the organisation (Table 5.3).
Table 5.3: Fincor Workers by Length of Service.

The influx of graduate staff to the Industry and Business Analysis Branch has also biased the normal profile for a government agency such as this with respect to qualifications.

Table 5.4: Fincor Workers by Source of Qualifications.

The Fincor sample can therefore be generally described as a fairly equal mixture of males and females, contract and permanent staff, with a relatively short tenure in the organisation. There is a minority of workers who have no formal qualifications and a high graduate representation, supplemented by trained technical or secretarial staff.
Worker Consent To And Legitimation Of Change

This section examines whether and how workers consent to and legitimise management control\(^{137}\) in general and management prerogative in the change process in particular, seeking information not only about direct forms of control but also about the bureaucratic, organisational-level control structures and worker beliefs about where the right to control labour effort resides. The discussion will begin with a consideration of workers' how workers grant legitimation and consent to the change process and management's role in general; and will go on to consider the variations of consent and legitimation attitudes and behaviours in accordance with the theoretical grid. As the reader progresses, s/he may notice that the discussion does not proceed sequentially through the questions from the Questionnaire. This can be explained by reference to the fact that the questions were randomly ordered on the questionnaire. The discussion follows a logic consistent with developing the reader's understanding of workers' responses to change.

Granting Consent and Legitimation

As Table 5.5 (over) shows, setting the organisational direction and leading workers to direct their best efforts to organisational goals appears to be a legitimate function of management, according to Fincor workers. The majority were committed to the goals of the organisation (q.11) and felt that strong leadership was necessary (q.18). Management and workers were perceived to be going in the same general direction (q.2, 12) and the majority of workers that they strove for better performance (q.13) and that management could trust them to do their best at work (q.4).

Trust and Direction

Although workers commonly felt management could, and indeed should, trust them (indeed question 4 generated the strongest response in this section of the survey!) there was a range of opinion about whether management actually showed that trust, as the following comments indicate.

---

\(^{137}\) The questions are described in full in Appendix One.
My previous manager had complete trust in the way you did your job. This one hasn’t. You don’t need to be told all the time. We all know the job has to be done by a certain date, etc. (Greg, Loan Accounts Officer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1. Change for quality = Change Ok</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2. Mgt/wkrs are working to same goals</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q3. I’m here to do job, not decide how to do it.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q4. Mgt can trust me to do my best.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q5. Management do good job.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q6. Benefit in Change?</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q11. Commitment to Org Goals</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q12. Mgt/wkrs are working to similar goals</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q13. I strive for better performance.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q14. Need Bureaucratic Procedures</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q16. Mgt/wkrs are a team here</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q17. Mgt should determine fair day's work.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q18. Strong Leadership Necessary</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: Granting Consent and Legitimation: Fincor Workers. (n=46).
I think I’d do what I’m doing without being told by my manager. I’ve set my own program. (Bob, Senior Industry Analyst).

I think it’s up to yourself to provide your own supervision. Too much supervision by somebody else can make things so tense. (Gail, Receptionist/Word Processing Officer).

Other workers, though, considered there was too much trust, sometimes resulting in a lack of direction, which they saw as undermining their ability to effectively contribute to reaching organisational objectives.

I think the supervision is too loose. There’s no sense of having any achievement - no positive feedback that we have made a difference or an improvement to things. We need to see that we’re winning - that we are doing something. You must relate your goals to what you’ve achieved. This would facilitate a team approach. As it is, everyone is concentrating on their job rather than an overview. (Jeff, Business Analyst).

My new manager has begun to use my reports, rather than them being ignored. But supervision could be increased. It’s easy to lose your direction. (Sally, Applications Coordinator).

More specifically, a lack of direction could sometimes make the work task more difficult for workers to tailor their jobs to particular organisational requirements.

There could be a bit more making sure things are done - following up allocated things. For example, [my manager and the CEO] get me involved in something and are not always available to discuss it later. (Rob, Senior Business Analyst).

I get too little supervision sometimes. I’m often given something to fix it up - but I don’t know how! (Louise, Word Processing Officer).

Workers and Management on the Same Side
Although going in the same general direction, Fincor workers were slightly less likely to consider themselves part of a team with
management (q.16). Indeed, management was perceived in a variety of lights by workers and the expectations differed as to how to win the approval of management. Some workers had a clear idea of what was expected of them and were happy to comply.

*You should adopt regular and accepted standards and work diligently.* (Michael, Analyst Programmer).

*Make decisions within the general parameters of the job.*
*Make supported recommendations where the decision is out of my control.* (Ray, Securities Officer).

Other workers were less specific about management's expectations of them, but indicated an active cooperation in trying to meet them, even when the problems associated with a lack of direction complicated the process.

*I try and do a good job - stick to my budget and do good quality assessments. I guess I try to do what he wants - only sometimes it's hard to know what he wants.* (Carol, Business Analyst).

*I try very hard in working to a level he would like.* (Jane, Information Systems Officer).

Initiating changes which are concurrent with organisational objectives was also seen as an accepted role of management, at least to the extent that those changes were predicated on the need for quality, and almost all Fincor workers consented to and legitimated the need for quality as an acceptable reason for management to initiate change (q.1, 6), though they were fairly evenly divided as to whether or not management had done a good job with the process of change (q.5), or whether (if given the chance) they would have done differently138. The process of change may provide opportunities for advancement, which is actually the outcome which some Fincor workers experienced. Workers were divided, though, as to how they could behave in order to ensure they were among the winners in workplace reform. For some people, it was a simply a case of meeting organisational objectives.

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138 A fuller discussion of workers' views on these matters is provided during the consideration of workers' satisfaction with the processes and outcomes of change in the second part of this chapter.
You'll get on here if you show you have the ability to interpret guidelines and regulations and that sort of thing. (Greg, Loan Account Officer).
You should have a steady work flow. (Tim, Review Officer).

If you do other duties as requested, you have the possibility of acting in higher duties. (Mary, Finance Officer).

For other workers, just doing your job wasn't enough. Management had to notice your efforts.

Be ambitious - never tire of learning something new. And show that you're eager to get ahead. (Jane, Information Systems Officer).

Be keen and industrious - think and let your thoughts be known. (David, Senior Finance Officer).

Have the commitment to do not only what management wants but to achieve the satisfaction that you've done the job properly and are progressive enough to initiate change rather than just being subjected to it. They are willing to look for better ways and discuss it with people. (Jack, Senior Review Officer).

In summary, Fincor workers upheld management's role in determining the organisation's general direction and consented to and legitimated the leadership necessary to achieve the objectives associated with that direction.

Limits to Consent and Legitimation
Although management is given quite an extensive sphere of legitimate activity among this sample group, it is evident that there are areas where workers do not consent to or legitimate management control. A substantial majority (77%) feel workers should be able to decide how their job is actually performed, not management (q.3). Yet this need not result in a stand-up fight over control with management: Workers can cooperate with management while organising their own time and priorities.
I do my job. I do it straight away if I'm asked to -
depending on the importance of what else I'm doing, of
course. (Penny, Assistant Securities Officer).

I try to work to the organisation's and the client's needs -
and the need of my own job. (Jack, Senior Review
Officer).

If my work meets my standards, I hope it would meet
theirs! (Gail, Receptionist).

I have my own goals and quality level and I try and do
my best within them. (John, Analyst Programmer).

I've actually got a lot of control over my job. They put
work in my in-tray, but it's for me to get it done. (Lorna,
Word Processing Officer).

A smaller majority do not legitimate or consent to the need for
bureaucratic procedures in the organisation (q.14), though the reaction to
bureaucracy is complex - workers can still legitimate and consent to the
objectives which the bureaucratic procedures are attempting to facilitate.

I don't usually follow all the procedures because there's
usually too much bureaucracy involved. All the
bureaucracy and additional work for a known outcome is
counterproductive. (Michael, Client Consultant).

I mostly follow procedures but there are too many
exceptions to the rule in this organisation because we
deal with people's lives and are responsible to too many
other agencies. However, we've tried to make
procedures take in these exceptions so you don't have to
go outside the guidelines. Also, there is a lot of detail to
remember in my job and although I try I sometimes
forget new procedures. (Sally, Applications Coordinator).

Interestingly, given that workers feel they and not management should
decide how best to do their job, there was a fairly even division of
opinion about whether management should determine what is a fair
day's work (q.17), with a large proportion not prepared to commit a
response, and about 40% split between it being up to management or for
workers to decide. It is possible that this ambivalence is associated with
workers' perceptions of management's qualification to rule. Workers
have shown that they are prepared to cooperate with organisational
objectives and have some sense of what is required in order to be valued by the organisation. This seems to bespeak a legitimacy which is accorded to the appropriate conduct of due process. However, workers are not blind to managerial arbitrariness and are extremely critical when they perceive that qualities which they consider unrelated to organisational performance are held in high esteem by management.

You have to agree with people - to some extent, compromise your own position and accept the organisation as a whole. People get on who agree with [the CEO] as a person, rather than with him as CEO - do you know what I mean? He has to like you, not just your work, if you want to get on. (Bob, Senior Industry Analyst).

We have people who imagine they are high fliers - and they are slightly brown nosed. (Douglas, Executive Officer).

Gender was reported as one of those qualities which could be helpful in promotion or the allocation of challenging and interesting tasks. Helpful, that is, provided you were the appropriate gender. Qualifications were also important, but they did not always override the perception that gender was an issue.

You've gotta be a brown-nose, you've gotta be male, and you've gotta have qualifications after your name. [Laughs]. Yeah, you've gotta have balls - so you've gotta be male! (Tom, Client Consultant).

As a female, you can't get on. You have to crawl. If Dad's a politician, it seems to help. Here's how it works. If you're male, you do your job, have the qualifications, you get the job. If you're a woman, do the job, have experience in the organisation and a male comes along from outside with slightly more qualifications, he gets the job. (Heather, Industry Analyst).

Don't rock the boat - management's boat that is - and be male! (Suzanne, Securities Officer).

Gail, the Receptionist, did not say that only the men were promoted, but she did notice that the more aggressive people in the organisation were
the ones who seemed to be 'getting on'. She didn't really criticise this, except to point out that it wouldn't always be an appropriate quality:

I think it's the more aggressive sort of people who impress the management usually. Though being aggressive would certainly not help you to get on in Reception! (Gail, Receptionist).

Having the right image was also viewed by many Fincor workers as sending out signals to management that they had the 'right stuff' in a number of other areas.

You've got to dress correctly, attempt to get additional qualifications, comply with the corporate culture. You know, toady up to the boss! (Ian, Client Consultant - who is doing none of the above).

You need to show an interest in the job, and get on with it. Plus do outside studies and have two strings to your bow. (Mike, Outplacement Officer - who is doing the former but not the latter).

On the one hand, it has to be "yes-sir, no-sir, three-bags-full-sir" but on the other hand it isn't. So you have to conform to the norm but also have to provide innovative ideas. New ideas are treated with respect. (Trevor, Outplacement Officer).

Still other workers considered management's expectations were unreasonable, or indicated less legitimate bases of approval; you had to have the right stuff but that right stuff did not always seem to be right in terms of work effort, either.

Work triple pace and be something that lifts his ego in the organisation. (Louise, Word Processing Operator).

You must be willing to listen to other people's point of view. By other people, I mean [the CEO]. You have to put your point across without being too threatening to their ideas. Basically, you have to impress [the CEO]. (Rob, Senior Business Analyst).

Be really nice - make her feel like she's really high up. She's happy when I pick up mistakes that other sections have made. (Ellen, Assistant Applications Coordinator).
You don't admit to the CEO that you've made a blue.\textsuperscript{139} Our CEO is of a very dominating disposition. You don't talk when he's there - he's got a very long memory.

(Tom, Client Consultant).

There is more than a small degree of political nous required to negotiate your way through any organisation, and Lloyd explained how he saw the system working at Fincor:

\begin{quote}
You have to be prepared to initiate change, focusing on the goals of the organisation and working out what you can do to enhance the organisation. You should discuss this with the CEO. You basically need to work out who's at the top, and who has got the influence to get you there. Identify who stands in your way, too. Just work out the leverage to get you to the top. (Lloyd, Senior Outplacement Officer).
\end{quote}

Fincor workers can thus be seen to withhold their consent and legitimation from management if the workers' discretion about \textit{how} to achieve organisational objectives is too closely interfered with at the job performance level. Similarly, though they accord the general functions of management a broad legitimacy, workers appear to make judgements about whether management actions are a 'pure' reflection of the overt organisational agenda or whether a hidden agenda is operating.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Summary: Granting Legitimation and Consent}
\end{center}

Workers generally consented to and legitimated the organisational objectives at Fincor, and identified changes designed to facilitate those objectives as appropriate and proper. They were willing to work towards these objectives and, insofar as management expectations were construed as related to these goals, gave their consent and legitimation to management expectations. Indeed, where they felt a lack of managerial direction undermined the achievement of organisational goals, workers deplored management's inattention and expressed a desire for stronger leadership and increased supervision.

\textsuperscript{139} A 'blue' is a Western Australian idiomatic way of describing a mistake.
Yet it appears that this leadership and direction is welcome only within worker-defined boundaries. If there is a managerial incursion too far into the day-to-day performance of the actual job, workers withdraw the consent and legitimacy which they had previously granted the management function and role. It seems, then, that management is accorded a wide sphere of legitimate influence at the organisational level - they are rightfully in charge of the 'big picture'. However, where the minutiae of the job is concerned, Fincor workers claim the greater right of control. It appears that the basis of both spheres of legitimacy may lie in expertise - management are believed to have a greater understanding of the integrated processes operating in the organisation, while workers feel they have the greater expertise in fine-tuning the job to better meet organisational objectives.

### Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation

The following section examines whether workers consent to control without legitimating management’s right to control a particular aspect of the labour process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q8. Possible to cover wkrs' skipping off.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9. Expectation of control over job.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10. I'm able to determine best way to do my job.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15. Best for me, not mgt to decide how to do my job.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19. Bureaucracy stifles initiative.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation: Fincor Workers. (n=46).

Table 5.6 indicates that workers’ desire to mitigate management’s legitimate right to control the labour process is quite high and that it is
expressed through a desire to control how their job is done (q.9, 10, 15), reinforcing the tendency emerging in the preceding discussion. Overwhelmingly expecting some control over how they do their job and, to a degree, when they do it, and indeed thinking they are better suited than management to these functions, workers indicate that they are able to manipulate time and work task allocation by covering for their colleagues if they wish to slip off early (q.8). Question 19 examines workers' expressions of a compliance with the hierarchical authority which engenders a sense of frustration, ultimately manifesting in a lack of initiative. A slight majority (43%) of workers did not consider the organisational bureaucracy to affect their initiative but a high minority (39%) had experienced such frustration.

Fincor workers expressed a belief in their own ability to determine the best way to reach job-related outcomes for the organisation. Many workers felt they could achieve better outcomes by not always following the guidelines laid down by the organisation. In this, they were consenting to the objectives, but not legitimating management's control over how to achieve them.

_You can't always follow the guidelines - it would be impractical. It'd bog the system down too much._ (Mark, Telephonist).

_Depend ing on the situation, sometimes you have to be innovative. Not all contingencies allow prior planning._ (Suzanne, Securities Officer).

_I have my own priorities. From my experience on the job, I know that some people are more in need than others and I have to deal with that first, in my judgement._ (Mike, Outplacement Officer).

_I've actually developed a better way which is more appropriate to current needs._ (Mary, Finance Officer).

_With different clients, you need different conditions. I like to look at each case individually. I won't always adhere strictly, I'd rather be more flexible - it makes your job easier and the client happier._ (Greg, Loan Account Officer).
Trevor's dilemma (below) exemplifies the problem workers can face if they don't legitimate the functions they are expected to perform, but consent to them as they are part of the job. It is an integral part of Trevor's job to make decisions which can lead to circumstances which he knows will cause considerable distress to affected clients and their families. He doesn't like doing it, but it is his job.

*I just work within the guidelines. I'm actually doing my job in a way that I wouldn't do morally.* (Trevor, Outplacement Officer).

Trevor doesn't think management are pursuing the right course, but it is his job. If he can find a way around the regulations, yet meet the general guidelines, he will. His desire is to climb the ladder in the organisation, so he doesn't "buck the system" and consents to all duties, however distasteful.

**Summary: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation**

Although Fincor workers appear to consent to management's overall goals and authority, they again indicated that they did not legitimate a managerial incursion into the specifics of how their job-related tasks could best contribute to reaching organisational objectives.

**Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent**

The following section examines how workers generally legitimise management's right to control the labour process, but don't consent to all particularities.

Table 5.7 indicates how workers might act to express their lack of consent and in what areas such lack of consent might be experienced. It can be seen that workers are prepared to say that they would support each other if such support was perceived to be necessary (q.29), but if the traditional duties of their group were threatened it is by no means certain that Fincor workers would take action to preserve the status quo (q.27). Question 26 seeks to examine how many workers felt they were doing what was required, but experienced frustration and were only waiting for another job to come up so they could leave. The majority did not feel this way at Fincor, nor would most people be prepared to work to rule to express
their displeasure (q.25), though a large minority said they were prepared to bend organisational rules (q.22).

I don’t have to bend the rules to get my work done, but sometimes to keep the client happy I have to. (Jack, Senior Review Officer).

I don’t tell anyone how I do things. So long as the end result is efficient, why should they care how it’s done? (Sonia, Senior Records Officer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q20. Work problems are inevitable.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21. Sickies not just for illness</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q22. I’ll bend rules to work more quickly.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23. I will work to rule if I’m disgruntled.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24. Do everything I’m told but fed up and would leave if possible.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q25. We’d act to preserve our group’s functions.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26. Workers support each other.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27. Like similar job in another organisation.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28. Never know what mgmt will do next.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent: Fincor Workers. (n=46).

Indicating their dissatisfaction about work, but without questioning the legitimacy of the control structures which made them dissatisfactions
unavoidable, fifty percent of the sample felt that problems at work were inevitable (q.20), and nearly sixty percent said that they never knew what management would spring on them next (q.36). Notwithstanding this, though, the Fincor workers were generally conscientious towards their work responsibilities - the majority considering sickies to be available only for genuine illness, not just because "work gets too much sometimes" (q.21), and generally perceiving Fincor as a reasonable place to work, not desiring similar employment elsewhere (q.35).

The TQM management philosophy which had been initiated in Fincor coincidentally with the restructure provides a good example of how workers can legitimate managerial prerogative yet not consent to the particularities of it. At Fincor, workers showed that they did legitimate management's right to manage - but there was considerable scepticism associated with the TQM brand of management practices. TQM assumes that workers need to be led; that managers, if they are good managers, can make the best decisions; that motivation equates with managerial goals; and that TQM is a general philosophy of management and, thus, is infinitely applicable. In the light of these assumptions, one can further assume TQM to 'rely upon a consensual hegemony in the organisation of the labour process' (Thompson, 1989:163). However, TQM offers no guide to managers in obtaining the consent of employees to the organisational changes which necessarily arise from the implementation of TQM-initiated procedures. The emphasis of TQM on the management function discounts the cooperation needed from employees and TQM, while acknowledging the resistance which some managers may exhibit, denies rational workforce objection, relying solely on the properly communicated worth of its precepts to overcome any constraints. Yet at Fincor, an eloquent explanation of the organisational benefits associated with TQM has not appeared sufficient to engender a broad consent to the strategy.

This TQM stuff is a load of rubbish. The amount of time spent trying to explain it would be better spent doing the job we're paid for. A manager should already know that sort of stuff. (Greg, Loan Account Officer).

The idea behind TQM is to try and improve a lot of processes within the organisation so we service the client
better. An executive joke is how it is viewed as here. (Heather, Industry Analyst).

We had a lot of meetings about TQM. [The CEO] was getting right into it. I see nothing from it. I still do my work the way I’ve always done it. (Penny, Assistant Securities Officer).

I’ve never agreed with TQM anyway. It’s a Jap concept - totally corporation-committed blindly. I’ve been on three completely boring seminars. (Douglas, Executive Officer).

I haven’t got much time for the textbook version. Quality to me means doing the best you can and giving what is expected. The “management” part of it is a lot of hoohah. A lot of imported culture. (David, Senior Finance Officer).

All it means is having the best procedures to carry out the task. It’s [the CEO’s] pet subject. We’ve spent a lot of money on that nonsense. (Matt, Administrative Assistant).

Summary: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent
Fincor workers continued to accord a broad legitimacy to what could be considered traditional organisational expectations, and consented to working conscientiously in accordance with those expectations. They would support other workers if necessary, but were generally not intending to quit or experiencing frustrated compliance with management control. However, apparently feeling that they already committed considerable effort towards meeting organisational objectives, workers did not appear to consent to the TQM strategy, which was largely viewed as peripheral to those efforts. Indeed, as some of their comments indicated, workers seemed to consider the quality of their work within their own sphere of legitimate concern, and were not prepared to countenance the implied managerial criticism of worker evaluations of quality of output which are inherent in the TQM model.

Withholding Consent and Legitimation
This section examines the boundary that exists beyond which workers will not tolerate any incursion of management control, neither consenting to nor legitimising management interference in what workers perceive to be their sphere of control over their own labour process.
Knowing What’s Best

As shown in Table 5.8, Fincor workers overwhelmingly see themselves as individuals to whom general rules may not always apply and think management should take that notion on board (q.30). This finds expression in the desire to interpret rules in a manner which is most appropriate to their own job requirements (q.31), and to yet another expression of the perceived right of workers to determine a fair day’s work (q.33).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Strongly Agree %</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>No opinion %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree %</th>
<th>Missing %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q7.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q31.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q33.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q34.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.8: Withholding Consent and Legitimation: Fincor Workers. (n=46).
I don’t need to use the supervisor. He knows less than I do. (Lina, Business Analyst).

Why do I need someone checking on me? I would just get on with the job anyway. (Liz, Word Processing Officer).

That workers feel they should participate more in changes (q.24) which they, after all, have to implement, echoes this theme of people who perceive that they are better placed than management to make a lot of employment-related decisions.

For example, the general ledger system is not interfaced with the loan account system so everything needs to be rekeyed twice, which slows down reports. I could have told them that. (David, Senior Finance Officer).

Since we moved, when I need to liaise with the personnel officer and go over to the other building there is no desk to sit at. And our computers aren’t compatible. When [my manager] is on long-service leave and [my supervisor] relieves for him, will I come to this building too or will I stay in the other one? I don’t know. (Mary, Finance Officer).

This movement of files so that different people can have input is a pain. I should “do” the whole file. If the review has been delegated to me I should deal with the whole process of making the decision and informing the client. But they don’t think about these things, and they don’t ask. (Tim, Review Officer).

There’s a problem with the devolution of decision-making. If they’re going to do that, management need to have confidence in your ability to make decisions. We need a committee to determine what we need to know and how much we need to know in order to make the decisions. If there’s no communication, there’s no real delegation. (Heather, Industry Analyst).

Extent of Compliance
However, when management has made decisions which affect the performance of their jobs, it appears that Fincor workers generally uphold
management's right to have the decisions implemented. Even if new procedures make work harder (q.23), or for which there are no good reason (q.28), or go against the way they have been taught to perform their duties (q.34), the majority of Fincor workers are prepared to concede to management's right to have them implemented. Even if they don't really want to (q.7), and feel they haven't participated in determining them, Fincor workers are prepared to implement the changes that management has initiated. Indeed, Eric, a man who could be categorised as a loser in the restructure, pointed to the constraints on management's ability to deal fairly and consistently in times of change and upheaval:

_I try not to be too abrasive. It's easy to take it out on your boss if the system's at fault._ (Eric, Client Consultant).

Nonetheless, the implementation of the changes that management required was often tempered by resignation rather than embraced with enthusiasm.

_I've got less control now, but that's the way it goes. All the regulations are now compulsory. There are lots of agencies monitoring the data - Treasury and the rest. There's been so many new things to learn, I've had to stay back till 10 o'clock some nights._ (Matt, Administrative Assistant).

_The way I do things since the restructure is becoming more difficult because of the bulk of projections - I'm having to isolate and identify the variations and give comments. There's so many areas to check._ (Michael, Client Consultant).

_Reporting has become a major task now because I have an assistant who does the routine work. But when she goes, those routine duties will again take up my time in addition to the reporting. It will be difficult._ (Sally, Applications Coordinator).

_A lot of the responsibility and decision-making has been taken out of my job. We're only looking at declined applications now rather than the full range._ (Tom, Client Consultant).

Summary: Withholding Legitimation and Consent
Fincor workers again appeared to indicate that they were better placed than management to determine how best their job performance could
contribute to organisational goals. So much did they have to offer, that Fincor workers seemed to feel that management and the organisation could only benefit from increased worker participation in the change process. Interestingly, though, and in a response which seems to reflect the legitimacy accorded to management's right to manage, Fincor workers indicated that they would implement job-level changes (even if they didn't like them), thus consenting to the performance of tasks associated with what the workers defined as the legitimate managerial function.

WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES OF CHANGE AT FINCOR

Almost all Fincor workers legitimated management's right to initiate organisational change in the interest of promoting a better quality service to clients. Yet Fincor workers did not always perceive that they and management were working towards the same objectives and there existed among workers a widely-held desire to control aspects of the labour process, which would be likely to mitigate management's control in certain areas. As was seen in Table 5.8, though, workers generally believed that they would implement the changes management desired. The employment relationship is therefore one of variable consent and legitimation, which behoves an interesting interplay of cooperation and resistance in the daily working life at Fincor. It is to an intimate examination of how these complexities pan out in reality that this chapter now turns.

Workers' Perceptions Of The Change Imperative

The introduction to this chapter explained the change imperatives from the management perspective. Management felt they had communicated this imperative to Fincor workers and, indeed, the restructure was subject to a lengthy planning process, of which most people were aware. The presence of the Functional Review Committee was universally known, though their Report was subjected to an embargo by the Executive Team,
who summarised and discussed their findings at Branch level. So workers could not be assumed to be fully apprised of the "facts" as management saw them, relying on information relayed from management. Sometimes workers saw the change imperative in similar terms to management, but there was a substantial range of opinion from affected workers on why the restructure was necessary, and why subsequent changes occurred.

The Efficiency Imperative

The 'other' category in Table 5.10 obviously begs further examination, but even a categorisation such as 'for efficiency' can cloak some interesting perceptions about change imperatives.

It was time for a change, for the organisation to be more in tune with the schemes it was trying to administer. Also, the restructure was supposed to help achieve a better work flow. (Sue, Personal Secretary).

Sue is Personal Secretary to the CEO and keeps the minutes for the Executive Team meetings and is articulating the 'official line' on the restructure. Although many workers incorporated the restructure into what they understood about organisational politics, the need to achieve a better work flow was one of a number of efficiency rationales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY WERE THESE CHANGES MADE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For efficiency reasons</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 36 cases.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.10: Fincor Workers' Perceptions of the Imperatives for Change.

To deliver a better service to the client and also to enable us to fulfil the diagnostic approach required by our charter. (George, Securities Control Officer).
It was to increase efficiency by delegating decision-making power from the Board to lower levels of the organisation. (Trevor, Outplacement Officer).

To improve the assessment process and decrease turnaround time. (Rob, Senior Business Analyst).

It was too much work for the Board to keep up with, so it devolved back to us. (Carol, Business Analyst).

Probably to make more defined boundaries - there was a bit of overlapping. For example, Client Consultants had to chase up arrears but one of the Finance section's performance indicators was level of arrears. Yet we had no control over them! (David, Senior Finance Officer).

I've never been told the official line, but I understand there was a perceived problem in our processes stemming from a conflict of interest from applicants who were also existing clients and you knew and liked them. Now, there's a higher degree of impartiality. Also, it was to stop the Client Consultants from doing multi-jobs. This allows specialised tasks now. No jobs were done properly before with the Client Consultants. (Jack, Senior Review Officer, who was previously a Client Consultant).

Workers sometimes expressed doubts about the professed imperatives and the benefits which had accrued from the restructure.

Well, the government expects more accountability but as to the restructure - that came out of the FRC Report. I honestly don't really know why. I suppose it's supposed to make us more efficient. (Mary, Finance Officer).

They say it was for efficiency. By breaking up Field and Extension from Client Accounts it makes a bit of a distance between the client and the decision. This could be good or bad. I really don't know. I thought we were functioning well before. Obviously they had some reason. (Ray, Securities Officer).

Simple. Organisational politics. [The CEO] had a vision of how he believed Fincor could best function - to a degree, it also resulted in removing a political thorn. The Outplacement branch, though, was a definite need. (Heather, Industry Analyst).
The Political Imperative
Under the restructure, the role and importance of the Client Consultants was constrained and the responses of this group of workers indicate their understanding of management's rationale for the changes.

Management wasn't sufficiently strong enough to handle the strong organisation that had built up around the regional structure. So it was "divide and rule". (Eric, Client Consultant).

I don't know. Because we were being a bit soft on the clients and needed to get our accounts into order. Our section was becoming too prominent in Fincor's activities. Plus there were big problems between [the ex-manager of the section] and the CEO. (Michael, Client Consultant).

So it looks good on the CEO's C.V. (Tom, Client Consultant).

It was just to get more FTESs [Full Time Equivalent Staff]. (Bob, Senior Industry Analyst).

The Job-Level Imperative
While some workers viewed the change imperative in terms of the bigger organisational picture, others had a more personal understanding of the imperative which had led to them changing jobs or functions.

It was an opportunity to use me to my capabilities. (John, Analyst Programmer, who has changed from providing computer support to more involvement in systems analysis).

It was for variation and to help fill in my time. (Mark, Telephonist).

I was offered this job. I was suited to it - I've had experience overseas. (Julie, Loan Account Officer).

Because I asked, in the interests of my job satisfaction, if there was anything extra I could take on. (Jan, Word Processing Officer).

I was doing too much - the job was too diversified, and it needed to be split. (Douglas, Executive Officer).
Occasionally, the change imperative didn't appear too serious:

They were just policy changes. (Mike, Outplacement Officer).

They were in confusion anyway being understaffed - we were just reallocated to particular jobs. (Louise, Word Processing Officer).

Summary: The Change Imperatives
There is never a single agenda operating in an organisation and this diverse understanding of the change imperative indicates how broad that agenda can actually be in the practice of daily working life, Fincor workers perceiving it to include efficiency, political and job-level imperatives for change. A similar diversity is apparent in how workers experience and understand the process of change.

The Process Of Change
Given that there is such a varied understanding of the change imperative, it is reasonable to expect that workers will exhibit a similar idiosyncrasy with respect to their experience of the process of change. Workers' satisfaction with the process of change was examined by inquiring into

- who workers perceived to be responsible for the changes.
- the type and timing of prior notification of pending changes;
- how disruptive workers found the changes; and
- whether they had input into organisational and job-level changes.

The Responsibility for Change
Table 5.11 shows how Fincor workers attributed responsibility for the changes which have been experienced in their organisation.

The CEO was overwhelmingly identified as responsible for the changes that were made at Fincor, though other parties were deemed to be causal players:

Worker complaints and the monthly and annual reports which showed that productive efficiency was lacking. (Trevor, Outplacement Officer).
Management - the Executive, whoever they are! (Tim, Review Officer - six months at Fincor).

The restructure was a direct result of the Functional Review Committee. (Sally, Applications Coordinator).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHANGES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The CEO</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Board</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Management&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 36 cases.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.11: Fincor Workers’ Perceptions of Responsibility for Change.

Notification of Change

Fincor is a relatively small organisation, with less than fifty staff - all of whom management considers were formally notified via a series of meetings and memos prior to the restructure. Yet, as Table 5.12, below, shows, the perception among staff who were employed at Fincor prior to the restructure suggests that around a third of the workforce did not feel as though they had been notified by management in a formal sense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WERE YOU NOTIFIED ABOUT THE CHANGES BEFORE THEY OCCURRED?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal notification</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal - from other workers.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No notification</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 32 cases.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.12: Prior Notification of Change.
How long prior to the changes occurring were you notified?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Months</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That day</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 25 cases</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.13: Length of Prior Notification of Change.

Even among those workers who consider they were notified of pending changes, there was a variable sense of the timing of that notification, as indicated in Table 5.13, though the majority of workers remembered having at least some weeks' if not months' notice of the restructure. Only a very small minority of workers felt the changes had been unexpected.

The Change Process and Worker and Job Disruption

A minority of workers did not consider the changes they had experienced to be disruptive. As can be seen in Table 5.14, it was generally the case that at least some degree of disruption, either personally or in the performance of their job, had arisen from the organisational change.

Workers, when faced with this question, usually asked what was meant by disruption. It was defined to them as an unusual amount of time spent either worrying about work, talking about the work process instead of carrying it out, or general feelings of stress or insecurity which they could relate to changes at work. Those who considered that their lives, either personal, working or both, had been disrupted in some way did not necessarily consider this a bad or long-term effect.

It was only disruptive in the beginning because of course you had to make adjustments. But now it's even better. (Sue, Personal Secretary).
It’s been a complete change in some ways so it’s very disruptive, but I do like my job! (George, Securities Control Officer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF DISRUPTION EXPERIENCED</th>
<th>PERSONAL DISRUPTION CAUSED BY CHANGES</th>
<th>DISRUPTION TO YOUR ABILITY TO PERFORM YOUR JOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of workers</td>
<td>% of sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not disruptive</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little disruptive</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Disruptive</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 38 cases.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.14: The Extent of Disruption Fincor Workers Experienced as a Result of Organisational Change.

Others felt the disruptions had a detrimental affect on the work process.

The disruptions caused by the restructure of the organisation as a whole slowed down the process of getting the new decision-making system up and going. (Rob, Senior Business Analyst).

There were a lot of meetings which meant you couldn’t get much done. Though, from the wider perspective of the organisation, they were probably necessary. (Jack, Senior Review Officer).

Occasionally, the disruptions caused by the restructure caused a sense of endurance to surface. Sally gained a promotion from the restructure, but her experiences since have not always been pleasant.

You’re made fun of if you’re seen to be a brown nose. I don’t get general cooperation and so I try to be quietly assertive. It’s very much an “us” versus “them” place and if you ingratiate yourself you’re seen as going over to the enemy and are fair game. But the enemy changes from day to day. The manager, someone in another section, another worker. But I don’t want to be
unemployed, or a tea lady again. I'll endure all sorts to stay here. (Sally, Applications Coordinator).

**Influencing Change**

Workers were asked to evaluate the extent of their influence over change both before and after the restructure. The following group of questions assessed workers' perceptions of their ability to influence the change process prior to the restructure.

As Table 5.15 shows, only a minority of Fincor workers felt they were able to have input into the proposed changes. The direction of that input is indicated below, in Table 5.16. Overwhelmingly, it seemed that those workers' views were given attention from whomever they chose to approach. Eleven of the twenty-three workers in Table 5.15 felt they had not been able to have input into the change because management did not give them any feedback about their suggestions. The nine workers who felt they had had some input were satisfied that management had either implemented their suggestions or explained why implementation could not occur, as Table 5.17 shows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO YOU FEEL YOU WERE ABLE TO HAVE ANY INPUT INTO THE PROPOSED CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 32 cases. 32 100

**Table 5.15:** Workers' Perceptions of their Input into the Restructure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TO WHOM COULD YOU GIVE SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSED CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anyone further up the hierarchy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 9 cases. 9 100

**Table 5.16:** Suggestions about the Restructure.
The following comments indicate some ways in which Fincor workers perceive their suggestions are received. Matt thinks management are not really interested in worker suggestions, but George does not agree; and Sally had her suggestion implemented.

They did ask for, what did they call them? "Comments"! (Matt, Administrative Assistant, who gave some 'comments', but didn't know whether they'd been heeded).

You could give suggestions to [the CEO]. A lot of people just assumed no-one would listen. (George, Securities Control Officer).

When the Board started weekly meetings I couldn't realistically prepare the stats so often. I told them I couldn't and said I should do them fortnightly, which I do now. (Sally, Applications Coordinator).

A larger number of workers have felt able to make input into changes since the restructure, though, as indicated in Table 5.18, there is still a negative feeling about the potential to contribute to change among a quarter of the sample group.
COULD YOU MAKE SUGGESTIONS AFTER THE RESTRUCTURE HAD OCCURRED?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 31 cases.

Table 5.18: Fincor Workers' Perceptions of their Input after the Restructure.

The next question sought to summarise workers' perceptions about the extent of influence they had had during the change process; over either the role or content of their job or how it articulated with other jobs in the organisation. As Table 5.19 shows, there was a range of responses to the notion of influence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE HAD OVER YOUR JOB CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A very significant amount</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some, but I'd have liked more</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No input was needed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't care about input</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 34 cases.

Table 5.19: Fincor Workers' Perceptions of their Influence over Job Changes.

Sonia has completely reorganised the Records Office since she was hired for the position following the restructure. She has instituted her own rules; for example, no-one at Fincor is allowed to go in and get a file. They have to be served by counter staff. Even the CEO stands in line and, although there are grumbles, she faces little serious opposition.
I had influence. If I want something, I just say so! For example, I instigated the switchboard being put under me. (Sonia, Senior Records Officer).

Rob is the supervisor in the new branch which was created as part of the organisational restructure. This branch is housed in temporary accommodation in an hotel behind the main office building and consists mainly of contract staff.

I've been able to have input into the role of the job, rather than whether or not the position should exist. (Rob, Senior Business Analyst).

Two of the finance staff are also in the temporary accommodation - a location which impedes liaison with other members of their branch.

I would've like more influence, specifically regarding the movement of our office to the other building and the placement of us on the organisational chart. Plus about the non-integratable computer systems. (Mary, Finance Officer).

The usual requirement during a restructure in the Western Australian public service is that all jobs are posted and permanent public servants - not contract staff - can apply for whichever position attracts them. In Fincor, this process was not followed. Management identified the people they wanted in particular jobs and offered them the positions. Matt, the officer who looks after the Human Resource function, was troubled by this practice.

(Laughs) Influence? Not at all! We had a chance to look at the proposed changes to the classifications. But it wasn't done in accordance with public service requirements. The jobs should've been put up first - not offered. (Matt, Administrative Assistant).

Where Matt felt management had erred in not seeking his advice as to the proper procedures, Sally perceived that being targeted by management not only gave her a "golden opportunity".

Management had a view of what I was going to do or be. Here, you always have the choice about taking on new responsibilities. (Sally, Applications Coordinator).
Sally was previously in the Records section, where she created links with the Client Consultants to get the "knowledge and support" she felt she needed to perform her duties adequately. When the restructure came about, she was promoted from Level One to Level Two and given a coordinating role. Jack, though, perceived that his opportunities were constrained by the targeted offers, though he did feel he had some influence over the job he eventually occupied.

*Though as a Client Consultant I was able to say that the Senior Review Officer position should be a Level Six, I wasn’t given the opportunity to apply for the Industry Analysis Branch manager’s job, I was just told so-and-so was doing it.* (Jack, Senior Review Officer).

Some workers are intimidated by either the system or personalities and, although they desired more influence, were reluctant to take the step.

*I don’t dare to try, but I’d like to have some influence over these things.* (Louise, Word Processing Officer).

*I can think of things which would be an improvement sometimes but I’m certainly not going to say anything about it - it would just start a scene with [my supervisor].* (Ellen, Assistant Applications Coordinator).

Others really felt there was little opportunity to influence what they saw as predetermined outcomes arising from managerial decision-making.

*Input was made, but I don’t think it influenced the decision.* (Ray, Securities Officer).

*I don’t think there is any need to treat the typing staff as though they were idiots. None of the typing staff were consulted, and one person decided how things were to be done.* (Liz, Word Processing Officer).

*The structure was predetermined.* (Heather, Industry Analyst).

*We were never given a blueprint of the restructure in practical terms. It was never talked through or the philosophy discussed so we could come to terms with it. Until management realises its deficiencies, it can’t do better.* (Eric, Client Consultant.)
It was a case of “this is the decision - it’s your job to see that it works and voice no criticism”. (Michael, Client Consultant).

Eric and Michael belong to a group whose importance to the organisation changed as a result of the restructure from a regional to a functional emphasis. This group has lost some of their previous control as decision-making has been largely hived off to other sections. For example, they no longer look at all applications - only those which other sections have declined. A great deal of the Client Consultants' previous functions have been taken over by the Industry and Business Analysis Branch, but this new branch is facing its own problems and staff there are seeking to influence how it develops over time. The Board had recently devolved a considerable amount of its decision-making function to the Business Analysis branch. Where the Board had previously had to review all recommendations from officers, it now performs only random checks on branch-level decision-making.

We need to have a meeting to standardise procedures and guidelines for decision-making. The work group has identified this need - and [the manager and supervisor] will have to hear us! (Carol, Business Analyst).

Summary: The Process of Change
Fincor workers expressed a variation of perceptions as to the extent of personal and job disruption caused by the restructure and subsequent changes; disruption which was not necessarily seen as a bad or long-term effect of change. Notification of pending changes seemed to have made more of an impact on some workers than others, and it seems that this may be associated with individual workers' reception of such notification as was made available by management. In such a small organisation, it seems unlikely that a potential "shake up" could have been entirely hidden from anyone in the workforce, even if management deliberately obfuscated particular details.

There was a broader agreement from the workforce about the amount of employee influence over the restructure and subsequent changes, though some workers were insistent about management's invitation to participate in designing the final outcomes, while others denied that any worker input was sought. It would appear that receiving feedback from
management about their suggestions might influence workers' perceptions that they have been able to have input into the change process. In terms of overall influence, workers again exhibited a variety of responses - most people indicating that they would like some influence over job changes and expressing a range of perceived actual influence, from a significant amount to none at all. The main areas where workers felt their influence would have been desirable was in physical location; work system integration and developing guidelines for decision-making.

Workers' Perceptions Of The Outcomes Of Change

The majority of Fincor workers reported earlier that they didn't want a similar job in another organisation, so it is reasonable to assume that it was a matter of concern to them that they maintain their tenure, if not in their current job then in another position, at Fincor. A concurrent concern was whether the changes would make their job, or work experience generally, better or worse. This section discusses both perceptions of job security and insecurity and workers' evaluation about whether they liked work more now.

Job Security

Job security may not, in the final instance, be the most important concern for workers, but it is an issue which is bound to arise in any organisational change associated with efficiency and economy. Fincor has a large percentage of contract staff; many who were hired in order to effect the implementation of reforms. Because the agency responds to client demand and, at the time of this survey was experiencing a high demand for its services, the present number of employees was surplus to more normal operating requirements. It seemed likely that many of the contract staff would feel some job insecurity arising from the temporary nature of their positions, but the perceived job security of permanent employees and those acting in higher duties were also of interest to the survey. Although continuous employment is assumed in the public service (Emy and Hughes, 1988:344), it is possible for people to be displaced from particular organisations if they are considered surplus to requirements after an organisational restructure. Given the uncertainty which these displaced workers experience when they are "redeployed", it
is reasonable to inquire whether the restructure at Fincor affected workers' feelings of job security. Though, as will be seen shortly, an inquiry into perceptions of job security also gives valuable insights into the way workers' previous employment experiences colour their perceptions of their current workplace.

Table 5.20, below, indicates that the majority of workers feel secure in their employment at Fincor, and the following table (5.21) shows that this security is not dependent upon employment type\textsuperscript{140}. Table 5.22 (following page) gives some broad reasons why Fincor workers feel secure in their job, and it can be seen that the fact that they have permanency does not fully explain job security among the twenty workers in that category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW SECURE DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR JOB?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very secure</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 46 cases.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.20: Fincor Workers' Perceptions of Job Security.

It is interesting the data in Table 5.21 did not reflect more career public servants perceived their jobs were very secure, but some comments from the workforce help explain these figures.

*I used to be very secure until the state went broke! Now there’s lots of agency restructures.* (David, Senior Finance Officer, Level 5).

*Government redundancies and restructures make me feel not very secure. But Fincor has got a growth future,*

\textsuperscript{140} Although the chi-square statistic could not be reliably computed due to 67\% of the cells having an expected frequency of <5, it is apparent that, although contract staff are as likely as permanent staff to feel secure, they are less likely to feel very secure in their employment.
in the short to medium term anyway. (Ray, Securities Officer, Level 3).

I used to be very secure, but now I’m just secure because I’m aware of employment changes in tenure in the public service. Also, our new charter decreases employment security. (Matt, Administrative Officer, Level 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE OF JOB SECURITY</th>
<th>PERMANENT</th>
<th>ACTING</th>
<th>CONTRACT</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Secure</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 46 cases.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.21: The Effect of Employment Type on Fincor Workers' Perceptions of Job Security.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY DO YOU FEEL SECURE IN YOUR JOB?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm very good at my job</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm permanent public service</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've got a fixed-term contract</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fincor is secure as an organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 36 cases.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.22: Fincor Workers' Reasons for Job Security.

I do feel secure because of my permanency. But I don’t feel very secure because I don’t know how well I’m doing in my job. (Jenny, Records Officer, Level 1).

Jenny was previously with another government department but had been redeployed after two years' service as a tea lady. The redeployment
pool suggested she take up the position which she now occupies at Fincor. Her experience of redeployment has left an impression upon Jenny which is not always shared by workers who have not been "sent to the pool". For Louise, the fact that she can be redeployed contributes to her overall employment security.

_I feel very secure, though I'm still uncomfortable because although there's a decrease in staff in the public service, I'm still permanent, whatever happens to Fincor._

(Louise, Word Processing Operator, Level 1).

Contract employees (Tables 5.21, 5.22) sometimes felt that their contract allowed them to have a certainty of tenure for a fixed period of time. All the Fincor contracts were for at least twelve months, and all were renewable depending not only on job performance, but also on management's perceived need for the position at the time of renewal.

_I'm still on contract, which means that I'm not very secure, but I think they'd be happy with my work._

(Tim, Review Officer).

_I'm the best at my job. A nice steady career path in the public service is not something that appeals to me anyway. I won't be here long._

(Ted, Business Analyst. Ted felt very secure in his job).

_For the length of my contract, I'm very secure. Management is protecting people from layoffs because they want a good public image. Also, I'm catering to the clients' needs - and that's a definite need of our section._

(Trevor, Outplacement Officer).

Trevor's comment indicates how job security is related to a host of external as well as internal factors. Mike, below, gives a different perspective to this point. He is the only part-time worker in the survey and considers himself a secondary contributor to the family income. He is prepared to continue in the paid workforce provided he can manage both paid and unpaid work roles. If he has to put in more effort than he can spare at work, he will forfeit his income and remain at home with the children.

_I know I can do the job - and if they don't like it, I can always go home!_ (Mike, Outplacement Officer).
Claire, too, indicates the strong link between work and the family structure. She was studying for a Bachelor of Arts degree at university but fell in love with a young man who was in the paid workforce. Her parents did not like her boyfriend and did not approve when she moved out of home to live with him. When he lost his job, Claire dropped out of university and took a job to support him. She has a modest approach to her value to the organisation:

*I don't think I'm bad enough to sack. They renewed my contract.* (Claire, Records Officer).

Claire's relationship is unstable - she is not very happy and has recently been "patching things up" with her family. If she leaves her boyfriend and returns home, she will try and reactivate her university career, so the organisation could feel insecure about Claire's tenure with it. This is a case of the boot being on the other foot; generally, it is workers who are insecure about whether the organisation wants them.

There were a number of reasons why Fincor workers felt insecure in their jobs (as shown in Table 5.23, below): The insecurity perceived as arising directly or indirectly from organisational changes; extra-mural bases for insecurity; or workers may not have given job security a high priority on their list of work-related anxieties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IS YOUR JOB INSECURITY RELATED TO THE ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 10 cases.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5.23:* Fincor Workers' Perceptions that Job Insecurity is Related to Organisational Change.

It was not generally the case that workers at Fincor felt insecure because of the restructure, but for a minority it was a *contributing* factor.
I have a personal need to extend my contract - but I may well be perceived to be dispensable at that time. (Eric, Client Consultant).

Eric is in his mid-to-late fifties, and management assumes that he will retire when his contract expires in two years' time. The Client Consultants' role was completely changed under the restructure and the diminution of their positional power in the organisation has contributed to a sense that they are now surplus to the organisation's requirements. But Eric has reasons which are extra-organisational for needing a place at Fincor. He has recently married a woman who brought a teenage family to the relationship, so he has three young dependents for whom he must help provide in the years when the organisational expectation is that he should be expendable without distress to either party.

As Table 5.24, below, shows, Fincor workers sometimes offered more than one reason for their feelings of job insecurity, or they might have had mixed feelings about job security per se. A contract might make one person feel secure, and another insecure. Or it might make a single person feel concurrently secure and insecure about different aspects of their employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY DO YOU EXPERIENCE JOB INSECURITY?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm only on contract</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm only acting in the position</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 10 cases.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.24: Fincor Workers' Reasons for Job Insecurity.

This is particularly worrisome if the person is new not only to the job, but to the type of work the job entails. Julie, below, was a Word Processing Officer, but was offered the position of Loan Account Officer at the time of the restructure.
You don't really know what your supervisor thinks of your work, you only know bad things second-hand. I heard via Jack that my supervisor said I was making mistakes and asking stupid questions. But to my face, she says everything is okay. (Julie, Loan Account Officer).

Alternatively, job security might not be an issue for some workers, or it might relate specifically to the particular job they are doing, rather than employment in the public service. Leaving a permanent position to take up an acting position is not always accompanied by a guarantee that your 'old job' will be held for you if the 'new' one does not suit you, or you don't suit it.

I feel a bit insecure because this is an acting position - but it was my choice to leave a permanent position in Records. (Delys, Outplacement Securities Officer).

It was Dely's choice, but the job she is acting in now has some career path attached to it - her previous job as Senior Records Officer had nowhere to go. Her choice, effectively, was to stay in a dead-end job, or move to one which had some risk attached to its longevity or her suitability for it, but which provided some hope of advancement.

Satisfaction with the Restructure and Job-Related Outcomes

Delys' situation indicates how an organisational restructure can lead to different opportunities and experiences - some better, some worse. The following questions sought to explore workers' satisfaction with the type of work they now found themselves doing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO YOU LIKE WORK MORE NOW?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.25: Fincor Workers' Post-Change Opinion of their Jobs.

Overwhelmingly, Table 5.25 indicates that those Fincor workers who had experienced major job changes resulting from the restructure were
satisfied with their 'new jobs' and there were many reasons which explained this feeling, which are summarised in Table 5.26.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW IS THE 'NEW JOB' BETTER?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More responsibility</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More challenging</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More variety</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More interesting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 25 cases and 35 responses.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.26: Fincor Workers' Perceptions of how their Job is now Better\(^{141}\).

It was often the case that workers felt their new job gave them more scope to put their own stamp upon it or, as in Sue's case, for the possibilities it offered in terms of gaining a broader experience within the organisation. Under her new classification, Sue was going to be acting in the Executive Officer's job during his absences - a fact that compared favourably with the outlook of her previous job.

*There’s more scope to this position. With being a secretary, there’s only so far you can go - the job itself won’t actually be extended.* (Sue, Personal Secretary, Level 2).

Sue’s was a common reaction to the ability workers now saw to broaden their interest in work via the increasing scope of their position.

*This job is more challenging. It’s got more responsibility and I get to pick up different skills.* (Lloyd, Senior Outplacement Officer).

\(^{141}\) Some workers gave more than one reason why the 'new job' was better than the 'old job'.
There's a bit more variety, particularly with purchasing. And I like customer inquiry things and being the first voice they hear. (Mark, Telephonist).

Sometimes, though, this increased scope carries a price tag:

The job's a lot broader, so I do a whole lot of different things, which is more interesting. But the workload is worse. (Tim, Review Officer).

It's not as relaxed, but it's more challenging. It's what I want to do. (Julie, Loan Account Officer).

An increased workload, as Julie indicated, may not always be perceived as a cost. Jan has picked up the role of Personal Assistant to her manager in addition to her previous responsibility of performing the word processing function for the rest of her branch.

There's more responsibility and it's more challenging and my workload has increased. But that makes the day go faster and so there's less time-watching. (Jan, Word Processing Officer).

A restructure may also provide people with the opportunity to use skills which they were not utilising in their previous role; these may be skills which they value and for which they had previously trained. The opportunity to work in an area which really suits you is often denied workers, as organisational objectives prescribe the level of emphasis which is generally given in any position. Heather exemplifies this situation. She came to the organisation 5 years previously with appropriate skills for the position she now occupies. However, within a short time in the organisation, Heather's "people" skills and ability to deal with complex personal and industrial situations saw her removed from the office and put into the field as a Client Consultant. After a couple of years of this work, which she did not really enjoy, even though performing it well, Heather applied for secondment to another government organisation. The end of her secondment coincided with the restructure, the Client Consultant role had diminished and management did not want her sidelined, her previous complaints were remembered and she was offered her current position.
It's completely different work - using the skills I have and what I studied for. It's more rewarding because of that. (Heather, Industry Analyst).

Heather was not alone in appreciating the opportunity to use specialised, and personally valued, skills and abilities.

This job has got a greater analytical emphasis and more time to do that type of work. (Bob, Senior Industry Analyst).

I like the personal challenge of producing the annual report and the challenge of meeting my manager’s expectations because of my expertise. (Louise, Word Processing Officer).

The job need not get bigger to provide these opportunities, sometimes shedding what they see as peripheral responsibilities increases workers' sense of enjoyment in their job.

There's less mundane work now. We can give it to another section. (Ian, Client Consultant).

Of course, someone else has to pick up these mundane tasks, but the things that were a distraction in one job might be challenging in another. Douglas' job has become smaller since the restructure. He has been the Executive Officer since Fincor's inception and, as Fincor has grown, so had Douglas' responsibilities. He still fulfils what he sees as a vital role assisting the CEO and writing ministerials, but has shed the responsibility for personnel and purchasing.142

There's more time to do specialised things now. (Douglas, Executive Officer, Level 5).

Workers may feel that they are a small cog in a large wheel of industry, and be uncertain as to just how their contribution helps to achieve the organisation's larger purpose. It was sometimes the case that workers felt their new job offered them more opportunity to contribute to the

142 It is outside the scope of this thesis to consider the psychological constructs which constitute coping mechanisms associated with organisational restructures, but the 'lay' view of both Ian and Douglas in this circumstance suggests that they are "putting a brave face on things". Both workers have been sidelined in the restructure, a point which was made clear in the interviews with the CEO.
attainment of organisational objectives, or increased their ability to locate their daily job within the agglomeration of activities which met some particular productive output.

It’s quicker and it’s easier to know what I’m working towards because I’m dealing with one manager rather than a committee. (Trevor, Outplacement Officer).

It’s a lot more interesting. I feel like I do more for Fincor. (Delys, Outplacement Securities Officer).

Workers may also like their job more when it provides them with increased responsibility and opportunity for decision-making.

I get a say in what actually happens in the job now. (Greg, Loans Account Officer, Level 2).

I’m more my own person - my own boss. No daily accountability to someone else for the routine part of the job. I’ve got my finger on the pulse more. (Ray, Securities Officer, Level 3).

There’s more responsibility and more scope to change things and have input into changing things. (Rob, Acting Senior Business Analyst).

It’s more challenging in that there’s much more responsibility on us - making a decision that will affect someone’s life. Before, we were a bit removed, but now you could be the one saying, “no”, [to the client] so you have to justify it to yourself. (Carol, Business Analyst).

Of course, not all workers are satisfied with the outcomes of organisational changes, and some people indicated how their jobs were worse, or had aspects which were worse, even if overall their job was better than before (Table 5.27).

Workers can be confused or uncomfortable about how their job now fits in to the organisational structure, and this may cause them some frustration, particularly if their responsibilities have diminished.

I’m still tied up in detailed work, but now it’s for somebody else to make the decision. So I’ve got more work and less performance. (Michael, Client Consultant).
I’m more confused about what is required of me and my function within the new structure. How does it interrelate with other functions? (Eric, Client Consultant).

I’m unsure of what I’m allowed or not allowed to do. For example, if a client asks to spend money on something, I’m unsure whether or not I can okay it. Everyone is in this position. (Tom, Client Consultant).

It’s only worse now in the fact that I don’t really know what I should be doing. (Suzanne, Securities Officer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW IS THE 'NEW JOB' WORSE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diminished or onerous responsibilities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too confusing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 8 cases.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.27: Fincor Workers' Perceptions of how their Job is now Worse.

The job may be perceived as worse not only because of professional reasons - a restructure may throw workers into a situation or set of relationships where they do not feel comfortable - the interplay between the personal and the organisational is complex.

Dealing with one manager’s attitude can lead to an expected result, so it’s a bit limiting for me now that I’m just working towards meeting that one perspective. (Trevor, Outplacement Officer).

I hate having to tell clients they’ve been knocked back [for assistance] or that what they’re telling us doesn’t stack up. (Matthew, Business Analyst).

I’m now having to report on people’s performance, which makes me feel like a Stoolie. It’s difficult all ways when someone else decides what you’re going to do. (Sally, Applications Coordinator, Level 2).
Sally's is an interesting situation because the position she was offered arose because she had previously shown a lot of initiative and was perceived by management to be capable and efficient and able to manage complex tasks under stress. She was eager to take on more challenges and they were delighted to promote her to her present position. However, there is one aspect of the job which is causing Sally a lot of distress - supervision. From Sally's comment above, and the remarks made about her in the interview with her assistant, Ellen, it is apparent that Sally has misconstrued the role supervision is meant to play in her job. She sees the supervisory function as telling Ellen off and reporting her mistakes and successes to management. In Ellen's view, Sally is "too motherly" and gives her too much well-meaning advice. Ellen resents Sally playing this role, but her resentment is tempered with a degree of tolerance because she feels Sally is pretty insecure in her position because of her background (prior to the advent of three children effecting her exit from the paid workforce, Sally had worked in a shop; she started at Fincor as a tea lady). Ellen also feels that Sally generally has Ellen's interests at heart (Ellen is on contract and Sally hopes that if they work well together she may be able to persuade her manager to "keep Ellen on" when her contract expires).

These are personal problems, but they are exacerbated by the simple fact that Sally has had no supervisory training. When asked whether workers in his branch were trained for supervision, Sally's manager mentioned her as a case in point where such training would be desirable. He felt he had made a mistake in assuming her to be capable in all areas of the job role, based on his confidence in her abilities in some areas. The situation is made more complex by the fact that Sally refused the training when it was (belatedly) offered, saying she would have gone earlier but she was getting used to it and didn't really see how she could spare the time. At the time of this survey, Sally's manager was considering how best to deal with Sally's refusal but still get her to attend, and learn from, supervisory training.

**Summary: Fincor Workers' Perceptions of the Outcomes of Change**

It was seen that workers' previous employment experiences and external relationships provided them with an historical and contextual background which could impact on their perceptions of their current job.
and their relationships associated with it. The opportunity to put one's own stamp upon the organisational performance via a job with increased scope and responsibility was highly regarded by Fincor workers, even though their workloads might be increased in the process. Where they felt the job was now worse, Fincor workers generally ascribed this perception to their lack of understanding of where the job "fits" in the new structure. Some workers, though, reported that they felt the job or its new location didn't really fit them - that it didn't enable them to make the best contribution of which they were capable. Where the restructure had enabled them to use what they considered valuable skills, workers were pleased with what they saw as providing increased opportunities for them to put their best efforts towards achieving organisational goals.

The Workers' Judgement Of Organisational Change At Fincor

When considering whether their expectations of the changes have been fulfilled, it can be argued that workers are making a statement about both the process and outcomes of change in terms of their general orientation to and expectations of the labour process itself. A worker's expectations of change must in the first instance be influenced by two factors. The first of these is their understanding of the labour process in a particular organisation and how that accords with their expectation of what should be in terms of the way in which the employment relationship is conducted. This is the worker's 'world view' and the conduct of the particular employment relationship is measured against the general expectation of working life; being influenced by socialisation and previous work experience as well as personal predispositions.

The second factor which influences worker expectations is the process and outcomes of the changes themselves. At various points in the process of change, it is reasonable to suppose that workers will re-evaluate their expectations based on events to date. Just as the likely outcome from a race is determined by the changing position of the runners during the course of the competition, so workers will adjust their expectations as hurdles fall or new opportunities open up. This, in turn, is related to a worker's world view, for that will colour their
interpretation of particular events associated with the change. A complex process, indeed.

As Table 5.28 suggests, it is possible to group workers into two broad categories, those whose expectations have been met by the changes and those whose expectations have not been met for some reason. As will be seen, workers were divided as to whether they expected the outcome of the change process to be negative or positive.

![Table 5.28: Fincor Workers' Perception that the Changes have Fulfilled their Expectations.](image)

Another category of worker is not represented in Table 5.28, workers who indicated that they had no expectations. Their views will also be presented in the following discussion.

**Expectations about the Workers' Own Jobs**

Where workers' expectations related to their own job characteristics or performance, there was a range of opinion as to whether they had been realised. A number of workers expected positive outcomes for their own job as a result of the organisational changes they'd experienced, and those expectations were met.

*I thought I'd get the opportunity to act in Douglas' position if he went on leave, and I am.* (Sue, Personal Secretary).

*I expected to be appointed to a permanent position as a Finance Officer and I was. This was able to be accomplished without advertisement.* (Mary, Finance Officer).
With the decrease in my duties, I thought I would be able to improve the job - make it more efficient and so on - and I have. (Douglas, Executive Officer).

Other workers did not have their expectations for their own jobs realised.

I didn’t really realise there’d be such an increase in my work. (Tim, Review Officer).

I was told I could train someone to do part of my job so that I could take over the decision-making associated with the Review component of my job, but this hasn’t happened and I’m still chasing signatures every time I want to pay anything. I expected it to get harder - and it was. I’m now having to chase around after things like the terms and conditions of loans and stuff. (Greg, Loan Account Officer).

My expectations haven’t been fulfilled quite because having [the new manager] for a boss, I would have expected more direction compared to before when we really didn’t have a manager as such. (Carol, Business Analyst).

I didn’t get what I expected because I was expecting a Level 2 position which didn’t eventuate. (Liz, Word Processing Operator).

Where workers had no expectations of the changes, their judgement of the effects on their job could be either favourable or unfavourable.

Because I’m now in charge of reviews, I have the responsibility to change things to the way I’d like to see them being done. Previously, I didn’t have this power. I had no expectations though. One day I was told this was my new job. (Jack, Senior Review Officer).

I don’t know why the changes were made from an effectiveness angle, so I had no expectations. At first, we really just didn’t understand why the new structure could be thought of as better. Then we saw it operating further and had more doubts. Now, there’s lots of confusion and dissatisfaction. I’m definitely less effective because of the loss of control. (Eric, Client Consultant).

I had no expectations. I wanted more money and I got it so I’m happy. Actually, I started as tea lady - someone left in Records, I asked for the job and I’ve moved up from there. They’ve always offered me higher duties. I have
an intimate knowledge of the organisation's requirements and goals. It became a job because early on I demonstrated that I was gaining this type of knowledge and [the CEO] recognised that. When they saw a need for this position, they offered it to me. (Sally, Applications Coordinator).

Expectations about Organisational Effectiveness

Some workers' expectations related to the increased effectiveness of the organisation in meeting its objectives, rather than to effects on their own jobs. These workers were divided as to whether the changes were effective on an organisational level.

It facilitates actions arising from decisions. Now I report to a manager directly instead of going through a committee. Only if the manager disagrees does it go to the committee. (Trevor, Outplacement Officer).

It has worked as per the plan. I was involved in planning the restructure as budget officer. The new structure had to cost less than or equal to the old structure. And it cost less. (David, Senior Finance Officer).

Under my previous manager, I had an understanding of my position and section in the organisation - and their future relevance. Since he's left, I've lost that direction. (Suzanne, Securities Officer).

Sometimes, though, workers' hopes of the changes overcoming problems in the work process at Fincor were not realised.

Everything in this organisation is narrowed down to the branch - there is still no communication between the branches except in need. (Jane, Analyst Programmer).

I'm disappointed. Nothing's really very different - there's no improvements in efficiency. (Matt, Administrative Assistant).

There's been further disenchantment amongst clients and confusion as to how the new sections would operate. (Michael, Client Consultant).

It's just got more muddled. I thought it would be good in the end but it's a bit more bureaucratic and there's more confusion. The result is the same though the process is longer. (Lina, Business Analyst).
I thought it might work, but I realise now that it won’t because we’re dealing with a faceless client. The Business Analysis Branch is now moving towards getting extra information on the whole client, which in effect means a gradual return to the old process - but without the benefit of the experience of Client Consultants. (Heather, Industry Analyst).

Occasionally, workers were able to see benefits arising from some degree of change, but differed as to whether they thought the changes had gone too far, or not far enough.

There is now an emphasis on the recovery of securities, which has expanded what used to be a section of my job and magnified its significance and role within the organisation. But it didn’t need the wholesale reorganisation it was given. Securities could have stayed as a section and been a service branch to the whole organisation. The fact that it has been decentralised and now occupies a small role within the branches could lead to a decrease of knowledge in this area at corporate level. (George, Securities Control Officer).

I don’t think the changes are complete. We’ve got a fair way to go before saying we’ve got to where we want to go. (Rob, Senior Business Analyst).

Summary: Meeting the Workers' Expectations

There were two levels of worker expectations associated with the Fincor restructure - those relating to an individual's job or job performance and those which were based on effectiveness criteria at an organisational level. Each of these bases of worker expectations were related, with few exceptions, to the attainment of organisational objectives; be that having to spend time on a neglected but important aspect of the job, increasing or fine tuning the integration of the job with other jobs, or simply performing a new job in a satisfactory manner and getting the work done.
CONCLUSION

Forty six workers at Fincor, a small Western Australian public sector organisation, were surveyed by questionnaire and interview about their experiences of an organisational restructure and subsequent changes which had seen the organisational focus shift from a regional to a functional basis. The post-restructure organisational climate at Fincor proved fertile ground for investigating how workers experience organisational change. The case study firstly examined workers' consent to and legitimation of the perceived role of management and the desirable role of workers in change; secondly analysed workers' perceptions of the imperatives, processes and outcomes of change; and, finally, considered workers' expectations of organisational change at Fincor.

Legitimation And Consent

Fincor workers consented to and legitimated management's right to control the organisational agenda in the following areas:
- determination of the broad organisational direction; and
- those leadership and authority functions workers perceived as necessary to reach the destination prescribed by that direction.

This legitimacy and consent could be mitigated by management being perceived as operating from a hidden agenda, or using management strategies which workers felt were peripheral to, or inappropriate for, the main objectives of the organisation. Interestingly, given that workers overwhelmingly upheld quality as a legitimate change imperative, it is notable that they did not validate the TQM strategy. It is plausible to speculate that workers felt the "Q" could not be achieved by the style of "M" in the model - perhaps because it was too "T".

Extending the basic theoretical grid which was posited in Chapter Three, Diagram 5.3, over, summarises Fincor workers' consent and legitimation behaviours and attitudes:
**Granting Consent and Legitimation**

- Acceptance of quality standards
- Commitment to organisational goals
- Perceiving a need for strong leadership
- Perceiving benefits in change
- Acceptance of a commonality of interest between workers and management
- Experiencing a sense of trust
- Striving for better performance
- Acceptance of fair management expectations of performance
- Implementation of management's desired changes
- Adherence to managerial instructions in preference to craft/professional/traditional principles
- Desiring to remain with the organisation
- Conscientious application to work
- Belief that management rightly sets the organisational-level agenda and determines organisational objectives

**Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation**

- Expectation of within-job control while working towards management-defined objectives
- Manipulation of time to the workforce's advantage

**Withholding Consent and Granting Legitimation**

- Support for other workers
- Acceptance of work problems as inevitable
- Lack of enthusiasm for management strategies deemed peripheral to organisational objectives - such as the TQM strategy
- Self-determination of within-job quality standards.

**Withholding Consent and Withholding Legitimation**

- Self-determination of the effort level
- Individualisation of rules to best suit the worker's job and thus better tailor it to organisational objectives
- Desiring worker participation in change so that workforce expertise is available to management.

**Diagram 5.2: Fincor Workers' Consent and Legitimation: Locating the Constructs on the Theoretical Grid.**

The present research found that workers did not legitimate or consent to management control if:
Management attempted to interfere too closely in how the minutiae of workers' jobs could, in their content and performance, meet organisational objectives.

Moreover, the case study suggested that workers considered that the person performing the job was best suited to tailoring that job to meet organisational requirements. Neither beliefs about according or withholding consent and legitimation appeared to interfere with Fincor workers' implementation of changes once they became an organisational "fact" (however unpalatable that fact may be), though the degree of enthusiasm with which workers embraced the implementation was seen to be bordering on reluctance.

It would appear from the investigation, then, that Fincor workers could be viewed as consenting to and legitimating management's direction of the broader organisational picture and leading workers some way to the attainment of management-defined objectives. However, these workers were not prepared to legitimate or consent to management incursion into worker-defined boundaries associated with their own job. Fincor workers felt they were better placed than management to fit their job to the organisational objectives - a perception which underscored their interpretation of the process and outcomes of organisational change.

Experiences Of Change

Fincor workers perceived the organisational changes to arise from three agenda - efficiency, political and job-level imperatives. It was earlier seen that legitimacy and consent to change was more readily accorded by workers if the changes were predicated on "rational" imperatives, such as quality or efficiency; and more likely to be withheld if a hidden management agenda was suspected. The perception of some Fincor workers that an organisation-level political agenda was directing the change imperative illuminated this hidden agenda.

Their CEO was generally perceived by Fincor workers to be the driving force behind the restructure and subsequent changes. The personal and job disruptions experienced by the workers during times of change were
not given much emphasis by the sample group who, on the whole, legitimatized and consented to the changes. The notification of change was variably perceived by workers, though few found it unexpected, and, given the scale of the change (large) and the size of the organisation (small) it would appear that reception of notification rather than access to information influenced workers' perceptions of prior notification.

Fincor workers often sought to influence the change process in some way, and had a varied perception of whether they had achieved this aim. It appeared from their comments that workers desired influence over the change process not simply because it promised material advantage, but because they believe that organisational outcomes would be the better for the expertise workers could lend to the decision-making process. This observation reiterates the legitimation workers accord their own role in controlling their job-related tasks, and determining how best to fit those tasks to broader organisational objectives. The way workers responded to job-related outcomes from the changes is a further indication of this orientation. Fincor workers generally enjoyed work more if the organisational changes had resulted in an increased responsibility and scope for their job.

Workers' dissatisfaction about the uncertainty as to where the job fits in the new structure accords with the high level of consent to and legitimation of organisational objectives which has been previously expressed. Fincor workers want to contribute to those objectives, but express unease if the restructure has left them uncertain how the job they perform will achieve that aim. If the job, because of diminished scope, limits their ability to similarly contribute, workers also judge it harshly. If they can use their skills properly and give of their best, it seems that workers will have a more favourable view of the job.

Similar concerns appear to underlie workers' expectations of organisational change. Even if a worker asks, "am I going to be better off?", it is likely that the expectation will have a broader meaning than "will I stay in this job?" or "will I get more pay?" Fincor workers expected that the restructure would and should facilitate the effective attainment of objectives and, whether the focus be on their own job or a broader organisational purview, it was judged on those terms.
In conclusion, then, the Fincor case study has explored workers' subjective and objective experiences of organisational change in terms of legitimation and consent. It was found that, while exposed to the same management strategies, Fincor workers' experiences of organisational change exhibited quite a broad degree of variability. This suggests that a deterministic approach to understanding individual behaviour may be inappropriate. The case study also suggests that legitimation and consent are, indeed, flexible and capable of being withheld. These matters will be addressed more fully in Chapter Nine.
PEERING INTO THE MIRE

Legitimation and Consent to Organisational Change in Four Industries: Workers' Subjective and Objective Experiences.

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Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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1995
CHAPTER SIX

THE WATERFRONT REFORMS AT FREMANTLE

*What they want is "super wharfies". Wharfies who can do anything...* (Willie, General Hand).

WATERFRONT REFORM: THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE

Industrial relations on the waterfront, Australia's "first industrial area" (Lowenstein and Hills, 1982:6) have been highly conflictual for most of the twentieth century (Morgan, 1993:1) and a series of government-sponsored inquiries into labour problems which were primarily attributed to the casualisation of work on the docks have been conducted at various times before and after the second world war (Deery, 1978:205-205). In addition to inquiries, the government has played a regulatory role overseeing waterfront employment relations between 1942 and 1976, via the Australian Stevedoring Industry Authority (ASIA) (Deery, 1977:93). It is not proposed to chart the history of waterfront industrial relations in detail here, but it is necessary to understand the state of play on the Australian waterfront prior to 1989, when the current reform process began. This section will thus outline the major problems identified by key waterfront players and the solutions they have developed to counter them.

The Employment Relationship on the Wharf

In 1965, the National Stevedoring Industry Conference (NSIC) produced an in-principle agreement between the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia (WWF), the Association of the Employers of Waterside Labour (AEWL), the ASIA, the ACTU and the Department of Labour and National Service. The central tenet of the agreement was the establishment of permanent employment (Deery, 1978:202-203). Because
of the casual nature of stevedoring employment, unions had historically sought to control both the supply of labour and the way they could be hired, and to seek some form of assurance from the industry and the state that workers would have income or access to social security benefits throughout periods of idleness (Turnbull, 1992:229). The permanency of employment arising from the NSIC Agreement of 1965 provided for trade fluctuations by attaching waterside workers to weekly employment with particular stevedoring companies or to a Pool of surplus labour (Deery, 1978:203), into which employers paid a levy (WIRA, 1992:6). All the employers could obtain workers from this pool in times of demand, and workers could return to the pool when their job with a particular employer was finished (Deery, 1978, 203). This arrangement meant uniformity in stevedoring companies' costs, performance and pricing, and, ultimately, decreased competitiveness (WIRA, 1992:6) but the the NSIC at the time "envisaged that permanent employment would promise enhanced economic security, a closer employment relationship and more harmonious industrial relations" (Deery, 1978:203). By 1968, with casualisation replaced by permancy, employment was still not secure as the waterfront was facing another challenge: redundancy due to mechanisation and containerisation (Deery, 1978:216).

The WWF has the reputation of being "one of the most powerful, efficient and intransigent unions in Australia" (Fadem, 1967:26) and their militancy is explained to no small degree by the type of employment relations which have historically constituted the experience of work on the Australian waterfront. Even the permanent job concept of the mid-1960s allowed for compulsory redundancy, so stevedoring workers were at the same time granted a guaranteed wage but not long-term employment in an industry undergoing extensive technological change. In 1972, compulsory redundancy due to business closures or surplus labour was eschewed in industrial agreements and individual, voluntary redundancy was encouraged. Although the workforce was reduced, labour remained surplus to the requirements of increasingly mechanised ports, and the general climate of job insecurity generated by underemployment remained. It was this general sense of employment insecurity which has been claimed to underpin the restrictive work practices which have developed on the waterfront (Turnbull, 1992:230),
an international phenomenon to which both unions and employers have been seen to contribute.

Both have attempted to make the most of their positions, the workers by stretching the work through time-wasting practices, and the employers by demanding exceptional efforts while evading responsibility for the working conditions. (Miller, 1988:301).

By the 1980s, Australian ports were internationally non-competitive and inefficient (Turnbull, 1992:230) and, in 1986 the Inter-State Commission into work and employment practices on the waterfront was established by the Federal government to try and sort out the problems associated with the sea to land transport system in Australia. By 1988, the Inter-State Commission had decided that waterfront reform was absolutely essential (WIRA, 1989: Clause 1).

Efforts to become more competitive relative to other ports have led to the reorganisation of waterfront labour as a linch-pin in a wide-ranging reform agenda. Littler (1990:54) indicated situations whereby labour management may become a central concern of the management function, including new technology; a changing nature of competition; high dispute levels; and the facility of international comparison. All these components were extant in the waterfront industry in Australia in the 1980s. When the containerisation and mechanisation of the wharf was first introduced, labour management became a central focus as negotiations over manning levels and training assumed great importance. Similarly, when all employers utilised the same labour pool, manning issues such as contracting out and provisions for double-headers were not the major issues they have subsequently become. Thus, management effort has shifted from its historical ad-hoc, accommodatory or fire-fighting approach, where it was in the interests of the stevedoring companies "to come to terms with the men rather [than] be plagued with stoppages which could mean the loss of valuable contracts" (Lowenstein and Hills, 1982:9) to a determination to be in the driving seat of industrial change. In this, management was aided by the Hawke Labor government.

143 A double-header is comprised of two consecutive shifts and are provided for in Clause 23 of the Stevedoring Industry Award (1991).
In 1989, a major reform of the country's ports was announced, with the Federal government taking a decidedly interventionist role by the establishment of the Waterfront Industry Reform Authority (WIRA). (Turnbull, 1992:230). WIRA's charter was to "improve the efficiency, reliability and productivity of the stevedoring industry" (WIRA, 1992:4). The reform strategy included the following elements:

- to reduce enterprise employment;
- to dismantle former industry employment arrangements and regulations;
- to establish a competitive commercial environment; and thus,
- to substantially improve reliability, efficiency and performance. (After WIRA, 1992:5).

On October 11, 1989, an In-Principle Agreement was signed by all employers and unions represented on the waterfront, the parties having "each acknowledged and accepted the need for fundamental structural and attitudinal change in the Waterfront Industry" (WIRA, 1989: Clause 1.3). The structural changes which were required included career pathing; multiskilling and the eradication of demarcations; new job classifications and productivity incentive schemes (WIRA, 1989: Clause 13). These reforms were indicative of the types of industrial relations reforms required by all sections of Australian industry (as documented in Chapter One) and, like other industries, were to be enshrined in Enterprise Bargaining Agreements. Also in concert with other industrial groups, the waterfront employers and, principally, workers were expected to demonstrate an attitudinal change to facilitate the attainment of the productivity objectives.

**Traditional Employment Attitudes on the Waterfront**

The Inter-State Commission had identified what it saw as major labour problems on the Australian waterfront, including:

- poor worker motivation;
- absence of loyalty to the employer;
- lack of discipline;
- a static workforce size in the short term;
• high levels of surplus labour and therefore idle-time payments\textsuperscript{144};
• expensive severence;
• high wages cost;
• ageing workforce;
• high levels of unnecessary disputation;
• restrictive work practices.

As Turnbull (1992:233-234), in his excellent exposition of the reform process in Australia, observed,

The problems were all interrelated. For example, the restriction of stevedoring to only registered...wharfies encouraged demarcations and restrictive practices, placed the workers in a very powerful bargaining position, and encouraged them to use strike action to secure increases in pay. The inability to reduce workforce size in response to technological requirements and/or product market demand created high surplus labour/idle time costs, make it expensive and time-consuming to shed labour, and resulted in an ageing workforce, as there was little, if any, recruitment.

Wharfies have historically found satisfaction in complex "set ups" and ritual behaviours designed to increase their enjoyment of boring and arduous work\textsuperscript{145} As these behaviours often found expression in the avoidance of work, the attitudes associated with them were the target of the reform agenda. In the following quote, Keith, an ex-foreman describes a typical day's work prior to the reforms.

\begin{quote}
The foreman used to take times on handling and delays. I'd go up to the office where the shed supervisor had orders from the ships about the cargo. I'd get orders from the chief clerk and then I'd allocate the men to the hatches. I'd call the men from the roster. Once I'd put them to work, I'd walk along the shoreside, making sure the equipment was there and that it was all stacked properly. I'd have a piece of paper with times on it. 7:30-7:50 Gear. 7:50-9:30 Discharge rolls of paper. At smoko,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{144} Idle time is the allowance waterside workers are paid when they are surplus to the needs of the port. They are required to be available for work, but do not have to work: "If not reallocated to day, evening or midnight shift that day, employees shall receive ordinary time payment for the day and shall telephone at the normal time that day for further general allocation advices" (Conaust Enterprise Agreement 1991: Clause 18.2).

\textsuperscript{145} Cf. Burawoy's "making out" game; waterside workers used the game as a form of resistance to, rather than cooperation with, management objectives.
I'd write the details on the shed super's sheet. The times would then be charged to the ship. Straight after smoko I'd make sure labour were out of the smoko room and on the job, see?

The container would be brought into the shed and all the containers were on the right and the cargo was then unpacked and put on the left. It was all put in a straight row. We'd pick up, say, three unpacking gangs. The unpacking points were two wharfies, one tally clerk and a forklift driver per container as they unpacked them.

One of the reasons the foreman was there was to tell the forklift driver to bring two pallets so they could be unpacking one while he was getting the next one. If you didn't watch them, they'd only do one at a time. The incentive should have been that they had a job and they should've been lucky they had a job. But waterside workers don't think that way.

If I was down this end, they'd sit down that end. You'd go down and tell 'em to get back to work and they'd go off and sit down somewhere else!

The productivity system started here two years before the EBA to see if it would work. Even before the new arrangements, the manifest clerks would help unpack if they had to work until 4:30. The foreman's job started to disappear once the bonus came in because you didn't have to chase them. Prior to the EBA, waterside workers would let me unpack, but wouldn't let me drive the forklift because I wasn't allowed to become a licensed driver. When I wasn't unpacking I just stood at the desk and made sure they were doing their job.

Changing Attitudes on the Waterfront

The intensification of the work process which has accompanied the halving of the waterfront workforce since 1989 has strengthened managerial prerogative and a lot of the spirit of rebellion and larrikinism evident in earlier times is being eroded - meeting with the approval of industry and government figures.

The waterfront was known for high costs, poor performance, bad work and management practices,
industrial strife and unreliability. This has changed and the people working in the industry deserve much credit for this. (Peter Evans, Chairman, WIRA, 1992).

Employers and their employees are working together, striving to meet the needs of their clients more efficiently than their competitors. (Senator Peter Cook, Minister for Shipping and Aviation Support, 1992).

The WWF has energetically supported the reform process, claiming to have maintained its "traditional solidarity" in the face of large redundancies and substantial reform in the Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) (Turnbull, 1992:237).

It is this recognition of "where it is at" that has maintained our unity - and our union. It distinguishes our position today from so many others in the maritime industry around the world. (Tas Bull, General Secretary, Waterside Workers' Federation, 1992).

"Where it's at" is working towards internationally competitive and viable ports.

We are not making this major investment of energy and both industry and taxpayers' money simply to achieve a smaller workforce on the waterfront, although that is an essential precondition for success. The key objective is the provision of world-standard efficiency in the movement of goods across the waterfront in order to achieve minimum costs to the owners of the cargoes. (Mark Rayner, Chairman, Australian Shipping User Group, 1992).

At the same time, employers on the waterfront have been making appeals to workers to increasingly identify their interests with those of their employer and the good of the nation.

You don't change an organisational culture overnight - you have to get people excited about financial viability...I was lucky that when I came here I found people who were willing to get excited. (Kerry Sanderson, General Manager, Fremantle Port Authority, in Pritchard, 1992).

[T]he assistance of the shop committee and the workforce has been a very important factor in gaining new business for us in the port and increasing our cargo volumes.

Team work and a corporate identity will be emphasised. The measure of success will be in terms of the improved performance achieved through a more highly motivated, productive and multi skilled workforce working within an environment built upon modern management and work practices. (Clause 4, National Terminals Fremantle Enterprise Agreement 1992).

Conaust Ltd realises the importance of employees working in an environment which constitutes harmony, safety, security and satisfaction. Every endeavour will be made to provide you with a safe, secure working environment, and to make your job both challenging and personally rewarding. (Conaust Ltd Employee Handbook, 1991).

Certainly, the future looks different from the past - or at least its rhetoric has changed. The extent and type of changes which workers have experienced on the Fremantle waterfront, and how they have responded and reacted to initiatives described by the reform agenda makes for an interesting and instructive discussion. The next part of this chapter commences with an overview of the research process, itself enlightening as to the employment relationship on the Fremantle wharf, then considers workers' consent to and legitimation of the reforms and management control in general before detailing the survey group's individual experiences of waterfront reform.

LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT TO CHANGE: THE WATERFRONT WORKERS' PERSPECTIVE

Overview Of The Waterfront Research Process

The waterfront research process was an interesting one, and many of the researcher's experiences illustrated the intricacies and defined roles associated with the employment relationship on the wharf. Application
was initially made through the State Secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation (Western Australian Branch), Vic Slater, immediately prior to his removal to Sydney to take up a post as Federal Organiser. Having obtained permission for access to WWF members, it was possible to approach the four main wharf employers for the research to be conducted during working hours. Application was made by the researcher to the Operations Managers at Strang Patrick Stevedoring and National Terminals, and to the General Managers at the Fremantle Port Authority and Conaust - both of whom appointed the Human Resources Manager as the liaison officer for the study. No problems were experienced with access to any of the workforces except for National Terminals, where the Operations Manager was not responding to repeated requests for a meeting to discuss the project.

This problem was overcome in a matter of minutes when, in conversation with the new WWF secretary, Terry Buck, National Terminals' lack of cooperation was mentioned. Terry asked if he could fix it, and was earnestly encouraged to do so. The conversation which followed, between Terry and the Operations Manager, to whom he gained immediate access, was enlightening.

_ Bob? Terry Buck. I've got a young lass here from the university who's been trying to get in and interview our members. She's contacted you a number of times and hasn't got anywhere. What about if I send her over now? She's a close personal friend of mine and I want you to look after her. OK? Good._ 146

Evidently, the union still "had some pull" and upon gaining the National Terminal yard, both the General and the Operations Managers were available for interview. That the wharf is not used to strangers walking around and trying to find their way into buildings is obvious from the paucity of signposting - an indication of the isolation of the industry: those who belong, belong and those who don't, don't. The National Terminal administration building, for example, can only be gained through a door on the water side of the wharf - not the more

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146 The two inaccuracies in this conversation - the youth of the researcher and her close friendship with a man she'd just met - were examples of the chivalrous and generous treatment the researcher met throughout her time on the wharf (though her feminism was confirmed by the experience of chivalry at close quarters!).
obvious, and unmarked, entrance on the road side into which this researcher, with the might of the union behind her, confidently strode. That, unfortunately, was the men's lavatory. An ignoble beginning indeed. Another aspect of the waterfront culture was made evident by that mishap, though. The story spread like wildfire, thus enabling the researcher to experience first-hand the waterfront grapevine - and the relentless wharfie humour.

To each of the companies, named A Shed, B Shed, C Shed, D Shed to protect the workers' identities, the WWF faxed a notice of the study and asked for volunteers. This was placed on the union notice-board in the smoko room and, in three of the Sheds, was followed by a visit from the researcher at smoko a few days later to talk about the study and begin the interviews with volunteers from the shop floor. A Shed, though, provided men through their labour allocator. The men were under the impression that they were having training and, for the first few interviews, it was necessary to disabuse them of this notion and explain the purpose and type of study in which they could become involved. Some of the questions asked in the interview were so reflective of A Shed's current climate that one man became very agitated and convinced that management had set up a "plant". Within ten minutes of his visit, the WWF Vigilant Officer was on site to address his complaint.147

Nominally, at least, the interviews were to be arranged through either the labour allocator or the shed supervisor at each shed. At all sheds other than A Shed, this practice soon gave way to the men organising themselves for interviews although, at B Shed, it was envisaged by the Operations Manager that one man could be interviewed per day, and the manager should be contacted if another was required. But the Operations Manager was never around, the shed supervisor was happy to provide as many men as could be fitted in, and the men were lining up to participate. An incident at B Shed illustrates why the allocation of subjects for interview was something of an illustration of the old and

147 A Vigilant Officer in the WWF is an Organiser. The union was able to set the man's fears to rest, but his concern was one which is particularly worrying to an industrial relations researcher. Respondents in each of the case studies associated with this thesis were almost unfailingly frank and open in interview, and it has always been a matter of conscience to me that they may have gone home at night and, perhaps, regretted their indiscretion and feared its results.
new ways of working: upon leaving the shed at around lunchtime on the first day of interviews at B Shed, a couple of men came up to ask to be interviewed. When they were told that there were no more interviews at B Shed until the following week, Patrick, a General Hand with 23 years' wharf experience, advised me to see the men direct in future. "We're in charge here - [the Operations' Manager] just thinks he is!" When in Rome...interviews were henceforth arranged by the men according to access times scheduled by the shed supervisor.

The interviews were conducted haphazardly among the companies according to availability of the men, which depended on whether a ship was in, and what type of cargo was being handled. All of the interviews were conducted in smoko or training rooms, in confidential circumstances. Participation in the study was voluntary, and management were aware that no disaggregated or identifiable feedback would be possible. Each interview lasted at least one hour and was conducted during normal working hours. No interruptions were permitted during the interviews, which began with questions from the Background Questionnaire and concluded with the subjects' individually scribing their responses to the Theoretical Questionnaire (except in one case where the respondent could not read and the questions were put to him). Further interviews were conducted with the Human Resources Managers at Conaust and the Fremantle Port Authority, the Operations Manager at National Terminals and Strang Patrick Stevedoring, the General Manager at National Terminals and the Fremantle Port Authority, and the retiring and in-coming Secretaries of the WA Branch of the WWF.

The Waterfront Sample

Fifty waterfront workers were interviewed, comprising approximately 15 percent of the North Quay wharf operations and maintenance non-managerial staff. The position levels (Table 6.1) of all waterfront workers were prescribed, at the time of this survey, by the Stevedoring Industry Award (1991). Seven Grades of "stevedoring employees" are
accomodated in this Award (Clause 13) and workers are classified by employers according to the type of work the employer requires them to perform, provided they are appropriately trained to perform it safely. As will be seen later, the grading of workers has been a contentious issue on the waterfront and management can be very secretive about how many workers they have in each grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION LEVEL</th>
<th>A SHED</th>
<th>B SHED</th>
<th>C SHED</th>
<th>D SHED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2 (G2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3 (G3)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 4 (G4)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 5 (G5)</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7 (G7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample = 50 cases</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: The Waterfront Sample by Position and Employer.

The A Shed sample (Table 6.2) contained Grades 4 and 5 relief crane drivers and crane drivers, respectively, and also Grade 5 leading hands. B Shed included general hands (G2-G4) and crane drivers (G4) in its sample. Apart from general hands (G3-G4) and crane drivers (G4), C Shed's sample included a leading hand (G5) and supervisor (G7); and D Shed provided tradespeople (G6), a trades assistant (G3) and two manifest clerks (G4) to the survey group. B Shed had the oldest and D Shed the youngest service profiles in the sample (Table 6.3), but each of the Sheds in the survey group contributed respondents ranging from little waterfront experience to a lifetime's work on the wharf.

148 The eighth Grade was not agreed at the time of this study and was subject to arbitration.
149 Relief crane drivers help out as general hands when the cranes are not busy; they also relieve full-time crane drivers during rest breaks. A Shed is the only employer to have the relief category.
The Waterfront sample can therefore be described as an exclusively male survey group representing the four major employers on the North Quay at Fremantle at the time of the survey. Crane drivers (18) and stevedores, or general hands (16), were the most common occupational groups, but the sample also included some respondents from all the other waterfront occupations covered in the Stevedoring Industry Award (1991). The survey group's length of experience on the waterfront ranged from two to thirty years; twenty-eight workers having less than and twenty-two workers more than fifteen years' tenure on the wharf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATIONAL DESCRIPTION</th>
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<th>C SHED</th>
<th>D SHED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Hand (G2-G4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trades Assistant (G3)</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manifest Clerk (G4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crane Driver (G4-G5)</td>
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<td>Relief Crane Driver (G4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tradesperson (G6)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Leading Hand (G5)</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor (G7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 50 cases</td>
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<td>50</td>
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Table 6.2: Waterfront Sample by Occupational Description and Employer.
<table>
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<th>LENGTH OF SERVICE</th>
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<th>C SHED</th>
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<td></td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-8 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 years</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>13-15 years</td>
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Table 6.3: Waterfront Workers by Length of Service on the Wharf and Employer.
Worker Consent To And Legitimation Of Change

It has previously been held that the employment relationship is one of variable consent and legitimation, and the waterfront case study upholds this view. The experience of work on the waterfront is unique and the way workers in the case study experienced organisational change reflects not only contemporary workplace idiosyncrasies, but also a strongly felt historical context. The sense of history on the wharf is palpable - everyone has a story of "how it was" and, as will be seen, how it was has had a large effect on workplace perceptions of not only how it is now, but how it should be. This section will consider how workers consent to and legitimate change; and the ways in which they withhold that consent and/or legitimation from management in general and with respect to management's role in the change process in particular.

Granting Consent and Legitimation

The following section examines whether and how workers consent to and legitimise management control. The majority of workers on the wharf agreed that management\(^\text{150}\) had the right to initiate change if such change was predicated on a quality imperative (Table 6.4). In the waterfront case study, the quality dimension refers to initiating reform to achieve an internationally competitive, more productive and multiskilled Port and workforce. To the extent that workers perceived management to hold these goals and be working towards achieving them, workers were prepared to legitimate and consent to managerial objectives.

\(^{150}\)"Management", to workers on the wharf, had a number of meanings. It could mean any of the representatives of management, such as foremen (now called Leading Hands) or supervisors, planners (the workers who organised the sequencing of cargo), or allocators (the clerks who allocated labour to particular jobs). Additionally, "management" encompassed staff at higher levels of the organisation, principally the Operations Manager and an amorphous group of more senior executives. To the Leading Hands and the one Supervisor in the survey, "management" generally referred to the Planners, Operations Manager, Labour Manager or General Manager, depending on the size of the company - they did not see themselves as management, though they appreciated that they were not quite labour. These wide definitions of management confounded the survey data to some extent, but are a realistic interpretation of the way the management function is viewed on the waterfront - another of the complexities of shop floor research!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree %</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>No opinion %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree %</th>
<th>Missing %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Q1. Change for quality = Change Ok</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Q2. Mgt/wkr are working to same goals</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Q3. I'm here to do job, not decide how to do it.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Q4. Mgt can trust me to do my best.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Q12. Mgt/wkr are working to similar goals</td>
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<td>Q17. Mgt should determine fair day's work.</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Q18. Strong Leadership Necessary</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

Table 6.4: Granting Consent and Legitimation: Waterfront Workers. (n=50).

Moving in the Right Direction

Question One indicates that 88% of the sample group did accord management this legitimacy and consent - their comments giving voice to the concerns workers themselves had had about the traditional labour practices at the Port.
People knew it had to change. The longer you'd been here, the more you settled in to the [waterfront] way. The newer guys had a different view. (Stewart, Tradesperson, 4 years on waterfront).

The wharf needed to progress - with containerisation and the mechanical stuff and all that, everyone knew the men weren't needed. It had to happen. The idle time bill in the East was astronomical. (Paddy, General Hand, 17 years on waterfront).

Question 11 assessed workers' commitment to the organisation's goals, approximately three quarters of the survey group declaring such a commitment. It was often the case that workers perceived the organisation's goals as congruent with the quality imperative identified above, and this may help explain the high level of legitimation and consent to organisational objectives. The sample group was divided (44% for, 46% against) in their response to question 6 which asked if they could see the benefit in making changes on the waterfront. Having made substantial change during the reform process, workers had a range of views on whether more change was necessary - or whether the reform process itself had gone too far. Similarly, the sample was split on question 5 which suggested management had done a good job and workers in their place would have acted likewise. Forty-two percent agreed with the proposition and 48% disagreed.

Change did need to come. It's been classed as an old man's working home or a home away from home down here. I found it hard to adapt to a workforce where no pressure was applied. I had to join in with that type of rate of work. Mind you, it probably didn't need a cutdown as drastic as they got. It's rush and tear now and even though safety is preached there are accidents waiting to happen. The Occ. Health sister is still on Vic Quay151 and the Port Authority haven't done anything to shift her over here where all the men are. The unions haven't approached her either. Common sense has not prevailed. (Harry, Trades Assistant).

151 There are two quays - Victoria, which houses the rarely used Passenger Terminal and the Port Administration building and disused woolsheds, and the cargo docks at North Quay. They are at least 3Km apart by road, with six sets of traffic lights, a railway crossing and a lot of traffic.
The workforce numbers were okay before but are no longer necessary now because of the changes in work practices. (Paul, Crane Driver).

They had to change. But I disagree if they try to change too fast. Look at Japan - all these suicides and this computer thing. (Nicolo, General Hand).

The goals to which they should be working, in the opinion of the survey group, was the enhanced competitiveness and longevity of the Port of Fremantle. It was those goals, set in a national framework, which the men believed had given legitimacy to the reform process.

It wasn’t economically viable any more down here. We weren’t competitive with the rest of the world. Running costs down here were unbelievable. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

You can lower the cost of imports and exports with less people working on the wharf. (Dean, General Hand).

This has become a multiskilled industry and the greatest workforce in the world is a workforce that can do anything! (Ted, Crane Driver).

Fourteen percent of respondents did not have a commitment to organisational goals and some of their reservations indicate the role that cynicism about the managerial agenda has to play in this picture.

The idea was to cut wharf costs and pass the savings on to the producers. But it hasn’t happened. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

It was just to cut idle time. It was definitely nothing to do with tonnage, because tonnage has always been there for the hours worked. (Glen, Relief Crane Driver).

Questions 2 and 12 assessed the workforce response to the issue of common objectives and, although marginally different responses were obtained from each question, around 60% of workers perceived a common orientation with management. This result was supported by a similarly high 59% of workers who felt that they were working as a team with management (q.16) - surprising, given the traditional animosity between employers and labour on the wharf. One explanation of this
identification with management's goals may be that workers often appeared to see their future and the company's as indivisibly linked; they would sink or swim together. That they were attached to a single employer appears to be important to this perception.

Now, if your company goes broke, you go broke. Before, you could do no work but you still had a job. This is because the work practices have changed. You're working for a company now where you were working for no-one before. (Bill, General Hand).

Since I've been in D Shed my attitude has changed. In the Pool, all you were looking for was days off. Now, you sit down and talk to management and it's a sort of joint venture. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

What it boils down to is that if we don't win contracts, we don't get the jobs. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

The quicker you can turn a ship around, the more jobs they can quote on. And that leads to more money. (Jim, General Hand).

Approximately 36% of workers surveyed considered management and workers were not working towards common objectives and a range of explanations for this was offered. These workers saw management working towards an agenda which was not congruent with workers' understanding of the change imperative: management were seen to be motivated by a desire to increase managerial control through destroying the union and cost cutting in various forms.

To you, they want the best for everyone, but behind closed doors - they just want to destroy the union. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

I don't know who to trust or if there's a future here in the long term. It's the downsizing - they want to chop the workforce again. (Harry, Trades Assistant).

They could update the machinery. Imagine what we could do with high-tech machinery! (Louie, Relief Crane Driver).

Training hasn't happened, but it's important that it does because the industry needs to progress to give it a future. (Craig, Leading Hand).
There has been no commitment shown to training or to payment according to skills. (Joe, General Hand).

It could've been political - striving to shut us down completely. They want to be a managerial Port; caretakers, getting in casual labour when they want it. (Laurie, Tradesperson).

A majority (68%) of waterfront workers believed strong leadership was necessary from management (q.18); though, again, it appeared that this leadership should be directed towards increasing the viability of the Port - particularly with respect to improving the position of Fremantle vis-a-vis the Eastern seaboard ports. Many workers felt they were actively working towards the achievement of these goals and sometimes management's attitudes or strategies had played an important role in these efforts.

I'm more aware of the economic climate and the need to retain contracts, because there's more communication with management about how contracts come up and that sort of thing. (Tom, Leading Hand).

Management have had to change too to survive. They do try to improve things. They've got more respect for us as human beings now - they treat us with more respect, more dignity. They have more respect for officials too. (Nicolo, General Hand).

[The supervisor]’s a lot more trying to guide the unit to a profitable end - whereas before they didn’t care about profit. (Colin, Tradesperson).

Other workers were critical of management's performance in achieving this aim or sceptical of management's agenda, considering that although company survival was paramount, the role that existing employees were required to play in achieving long term success was still deemed marginal by management, illustrating the role that recognition of effort is starting to play on the waterfront. Workers were beginning to look critically at management's performance. It would seem that one of the things that can happen when a firm tries to imbue a productivity culture is that workers, if they take it on, do work harder, faster, better. But after a time, they start to look at management's ability to meet their own objectives. If workers are turning the ships around more quickly, why is management losing contracts?
Look, we had this ship out two and a half days before schedule for them because "we need the business and we've got to show them that we're a viable operation here". And what happened? Next time the ship came in, C Shed had it. Well, that's our livelihood too, and they're messing it up. (Ted, Crane Driver).

The productivity culture has brought a criticism of management based, not on their hierarchical position, but on management's expertise in managing and achieving organisational goals.

Technology is bad here. We get second-hand equipment from over East. If they want us to be world competitive we have to have the same technology. They need to go out and get it, but I guess it comes down to money in the end - whether they're prepared to spend it. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

They need to get rid of some management and put people there who know what's going on. Management needs to have a good look at itself. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

My job satisfaction is undermined by management's lack of commitment to multiskilling and the way they keep losing contracts. We want this company to succeed - but what is management doing to help? (Joe, General Hand).

It's one-way traffic with them. There's no disclosure of financial information. They tell us we're hanging on by the skin of our teeth. All this "poor me" stuff. We can't get access to the facts and figures though. It's all secret service. We've made this company a fortune and they still lose contracts. (Ted, Crane Driver).

Management up above doesn't give [our foreman] any help or support in getting jobs for us. [The site manager] goes against everything the consultative committee says will help. (Harry, Trades Assistant).

Strong leadership was not deemed necessary by a third of the sample group and the familiarity of workers with their jobs and their ability to carry them out expertly and efficiently without direction was made again and again.

Management just get in my way. They tell me things. (Glen, Relief Crane Driver).
They cut back on costs for us, but often you don’t need a supervisor. Management need to look at their manning scales and practices. (David, Crane Driver).

It’s just not necessary to have people telling you what to do under the incentive scheme. (Steve, General Hand).

The preceding responses have seemed to suggest that, provided they perceived management to be initiating changes aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of their operations, workers appeared to accord legitimacy to management’s efforts and consented to and cooperated with those changes, working with management to make the company successful. However, where workers perceived management to be operating from a hidden agenda - such as cost cutting or a desire to destroy the union - or not perceived to be putting in an appropriate effort themselves, consent and legitimation seem to have been withheld.

Performance and Recognition
The waterfront workers represented in the sample appear to accord management legitimacy in their attempts to initiate changes in order to achieve what the workers perceived to be desirable objectives. The majority were committed to organisational goals and overwhelmingly felt that management could trust them to do their best towards achieving them (q.4) as they were generally striving for better performance (q.13). That workers often felt management was justified in expecting, and receiving, better performance from them was illustrated in a number of observations on the contrast between contemporary and traditional work practices on the waterfront.

The workforce is now 80% switched on where it was maybe 5% switched on before. (Joe, General Hand).

Some lazy individuals have got away with murder for years. But I think that the work is actually being done now. On the wharf there is a lot of efficient work done - more than in other places. (Colin, Tradesperson).

We do more in a day because we’re multiskilled and because they picked out the right guys to do the job. You know it’s your job now and if you don’t make a go of it we’re all out of a job. It’s the dollars at the end of the day, that’s what we’re all here for. I can have the manifest in
my cab and write it down as I go. I don’t need a tally clerk there with me. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

The job doesn’t stop once it starts. People are more involved in what’s happening with the job. (Jerry, Crane Driver).

It was overwhelmingly the case that respondents felt they were doing their utmost for their industry and this was reflected in many statements indicating a pride in their work - this pride often being its own incentive.

No-one’s waving a $50 bill at you. Your own sort of pride or whatever is an incentive. Someone might be waiting on a job. (Jim, Tradesperson).

We loaded 60,000 sheep in a day! That’s job satisfaction. It’s never been done before! (Michael, Crane Driver).

The bonus is their little carrot, big stick. But you’ve also got your job satisfaction - the day goes quicker if you work harder. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

A good day is when you have a sense of achievement. A bad day is when you’re not appreciated for that achievement. (Ted, Crane Driver).

Ted’s comment is an example of how recognition of their efforts was important for many waterfront workers, as it is for many workers in other industries. But for wharfies in particular, the personal recognition which has come with the reform is a meaningful reminder that the rules of the game have changed, and some of them are seen as definitely for the better.

They’re more personal with you. Before, you couldn’t talk to them. Every wharfie in Australia is now on talking terms with the boss. Ten years ago, the boss wouldn’t have acknowledged them and we wouldn’t have acknowledged him. (Paddy, General Hand).

They come down here and talk to you more often and tell us how poor the company is. [The manager] is quite open to talk - he’s said his door is always open. He treats you like a human being. There’s not much animosity in him at all. (Davy, Crane Driver).
They all seem to call you by your first name and we call them by their first name. (George, General Hand).

Some wharfies thought that management still refused to recognise their contribution - and it rankled.

A leopard never changes his spots. One guy here is a Singaporean and he went for a job interview to go from grade 2 to grade 3. They didn't even know who he was - thought he'd come from the Pool. He'd worked for A Shed for 15 years. Anyway, he had an accident three days ago - no-one from management has asked how he is. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

They're still the same turds that they were before. It's been well stated over the years that they just don't want to see you. (Bill, Relief Crane Driver).

You're still only just a number to them. (Keith, General Hand).

The sample group indicated that they consented to and legitimated organisational objectives and felt management could trust them to perform well in achieving those objectives. When management did not accord them the recognition they felt they deserved, waterfront workers expressed considerable dissatisfaction.

Limits to Consent and Legitimation

While the waterfront management was given quite an extensive sphere of legitimate activity it is apparent that there were areas where workers did not consent to or legitimate managerial control. A substantial majority (72%) believed that workers should decide how to perform their job (q.3). Yet, in this desire, workers were still indicating an identification with organisational objectives. The attitude expressed towards supervision is one indication of this.

I'm used as a foreman as well as as a crane driver. Most waterside workers have been here longer than a foreman and know what to do better anyway. Supervision will be phased out in time. (Michael, Crane Driver).

There are times when the supervisor's knowledge or experience can help, but other times they stick their nose
in and don't know what they're talking about. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

It's just not effective because the people who try to tell us what to do are all dills. (Bill, Relief Crane Driver).

There was a widely-held view among the survey group that on the job experience has considerable weight in determining the best way the job should be performed in order to achieve the most efficient output, even if there was some cynicism about how management might use the feedback available from the workforce.

They're much more accessible at the local level and more prepared to pick your brain. It's a joke about information-sharing, though. It basically means, "you share the information and I'll get the promotion"! (Craig, Leading Hand).

They all seem the same to me. I'm probably anti-management myself. They do a lot of things the wrong way - they don't consult and ask "How do we go about doing this?". (Laurie, Tradesperson).

The lack of work at the moment puts us behind. If we were more autonomous, that would help. [Our foreman] could make more decisions which were appropriate. The central ordering system, as an example, buggers things up. (Stewart, Tradesperson).

It's just common sense. Half the supervisors wouldn't know - they just come out of an office. (George, General Hand).

We're all experienced seafarers and yet management won't listen to us! (Craig, Supervisor).

Where workers agreed that management should determine how the work was done (as in 28% of answers to q.3), the response was a reflection of the particular role which workers accorded management.

You've got to have someone who's giving the orders. (Keith, General Hand).

Employers say and do. That's his job. My job is to shut up and do as I'm told. (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).
We're not paid to control anything. We just drive the cranes. (Louie, Relief Crane Driver).

You need the supervision to make a job run smoothly because you can't see what's happening. You need it from ship to shoreside. The manifest has to be right. (Bill, General Hand).

The waterfront is not particularly bureaucratic in comparison to an office, and many respondents balked at question 14 which assessed whether workers thought bureaucratic procedures were necessary. "What do you mean by this?" was commonly asked. When told it referred to paperwork and the red tape associated with a large organisation, the most common verbal response was that they needed the manifest but they weren't here to spend their days filling in forms and was it going to come to that?

If we knocked back every truck whose paperwork wasn't done properly we'd never get things done. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

It's very inefficient for us when manifests don't get here on time from the shipping companies. For our efficiency rating, we could do to have computers upstairs for the manifest. (Graham, Acting Manifest Clerk).

Nonetheless, workers were mindful of the role of careful planning in the appropriate execution of their duties.

We're governed by the sequence sheet largely. (Craig, Leading Hand).

It just completely puts you back if the job is badly planned like when the boxes are at opposite ends of the yard. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

A considerable majority of waterfront workers (80%) felt workers had the right to determine a fair day's work (q.17), only 6% disagreeing. For many workers, this doesn't only mirror the change they have recently made in their own attitude to work, it appears to reflect a deeply held view of a worker's sense of control.
I've always believed that most militants come to work to do their work to the best of their ability and be left alone. As an example, if the line has to be painted, the sooner I do it the sooner I can get out of the sun. I don't need Joe Bloggs telling me to hurry up. (Jim, General Hand).

I like work, I always have. So the more work the better. I don't need to be pushed. (Matthew, Crane Driver).

I always had a competitive attitude to the job. Crane drivers always jibe each other about how many containers we can do. (Bob, Crane Driver).

Everyone is generally working harder, but not me. I've always worked hard. I take the attitude that you work when you're at your job and do a fair day's work. I'm my own boss in that respect. (Steve, General Hand).

Waterfront workers can thus be seen to withhold their consent and legitimation from management if the workers' discretion about how to achieve organisational objectives is too closely interfered with at the job performance level; though they do legitimate and consent to management's role in the planning process.

Summary: Granting Consent and Legitimation
Waterfront workers generally consented to and legitimated management's role in initiating changes associated with the increased competitiveness and viability of the Port of Fremantle. Workers were willing to work towards these goals, and actively cooperated with strategies designed to enhance the competitiveness of their own employer. Strong and effective leadership from management was welcomed by workers, though they were ambivalent as to how well management strategy and behaviour was facilitating stated organisational goals. Management leadership and direction, however, did not appear to be consented to or legitimated by workers within the confines of their own job boundaries; workers perceived that they, and not management, had the expertise to perform the job in a manner which was most likely to meet organisational objectives. This view was complemented by the workers' belief that they rightly had control over the immediate effort bargain: workers, not management, should determine a fair day's work and, indeed, could be trusted do their utmost to achieve the firm's goals by virtue of the proper conduct of their jobs.

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It thus appeared that management were accorded legitimacy where workers perceived they were acting appropriately in management's legitimate sphere of expertise - the "big picture". If management abused this legitimate control, by acting from a political rather than an efficiency agenda; or if management transgressed from the big picture to an attempt to impose controls on workers' job performance, the legitimacy and consent available to them would be withheld.

Granting Consent and withholding Legitimation

The following section examines whether workers consent to control generally without legitimating management's right to control a particular aspect of the labour process. Table 6.5 indicates that workers have a considerable expectation of control over their job (q.9, 15) and that control is expressed through their expertise in the job (q.10) - which reinforces the trend that has been apparent to date. There was a mixed reaction to whether workers should, or could, manipulate time to their advantage (q.8); and a slight majority perception that bureaucracy stifled initiative (q.19).

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Table 6.5: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation: Waterfront Workers. (n=50).

The survey group's responses in this section reflect the trend which has already become apparent: Waterfront workers appeared to consent to
management's right to expect a job to be performed properly, but did not appear to believe that management should legitimately decide how that objective should be achieved. Rather, asking a waterfront worker whether he consents to and legitimates rules in the workplace leads to an exposition on union rules governing work practices. So, when workers talked about bending rules to achieve greater productivity, they meant bending union rules to increase productivity for management. The legitimate sphere of rule-making thus belonged to the workforce via the collective control of the union, but workers consented to management's efficiency objectives, as the following comments show.

We've had to break the rules over the years because we couldn't work inside the union policy. You're supposed to have only one man to a truck and we usually have more. Or three men to a container and sometimes we work only one man to a container. And we don't have a foreman to every seven men. Everyone's trying to get the extra one in to beat Joe Bloggs and get a letter of congratulation from the boss. They drive around on flat tires! (Glen, Relief Crane Driver).

For speed and efficiency, we have to bend the rules. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

To get it done at a reasonable speed, you have to break the rules. What are the rules, anyway? The union's pretty pragmatic around here now. (John, Leading Hand).

Nearly all the rules have gone out the door at any rate. You hear them forks? They go all the time now - they used to stop once. (Bill, General Hand).

We've gotta work harder because the mob next door are killing us. If we lose our contracts, we've had it. (Dean, General Hand).

This pragmatic sense of what the workers will consent to is amply illustrated in their reaction to the presence of casual labour on the wharf. The workers legitimise management's right to hire and fire, but only within very strict boundaries. There is a B-Register of retired waterside workers from which management is expected to choose extra workers
when the Shed is under-manned. This is agreed to in the EBAs, but so is the provision for the safe deployment of casual labour. Almost universally, workers didn't think the use of casuals was right, but they consented to working beside them, even while according the practice no legitimacy except for that which it gained by being part of the agreement which was negotiated between management and the union, and provided the casuals were unionised.

_I don't like it, but it was part of the WIRA agreement so we have to go along with it._ (Michael, Crane Driver).

It's going to have to be, but I'm not really for it. (Davy, Crane Driver).

The "seagulls" are bad news. You've got to know the area and the industry. Everything is too fast and you need to be familiar with it for safety. But we've got no choice. (Dennis, Crane Driver).

Well. Say no more. They're here today with no consultation. It's no problem if they make them permanent. We can't treat 'em too bad because they'll turn to the boss. We have to be a bit friendly and get 'em around to our way of thinking. The union should be over here right now but they're not. And rumour has it that one of the casuals is the son of one of our elected officials. (Bill, Relief Crane Driver).

_I don't like it, but in the end, what are you gonna do?_ (David, Crane Driver).

Part of the problem for workers is that the use of casuals, and for some workers, the B Roster, denies one of the principal objectives of the waterfront reform process - the revitalisation of the workforce with younger, permanent new recruits.

I'm in two minds. Once it's started, it'll just go across the board. It's a leg-in to make everyone casual. But it's not right to have the B Roster people back in. I think they should be employing people properly. How many casuals equals one permanent job? (Jim, Tradesperson).

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152 The B Roster is a list of retired waterfront workers who may be used as supplementary labour when the demand exceeds the supply of permanent labour. There is provision in the Award for the addition of casual, unionised labour to the B Roster.

153 "Seagulls" is wharf idiom for casual labour - picking up the scraps.
They could be permanent jobs. We were promised a thousand jobs. (Jack, General Hand).

It will eventually destroy us. Two things. 1. There should be new people getting the opportunity. 2. They should be employed permanent - there's the work. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

They slipped in unawares. We thought we'd voted for people to come in on a guarantee of two years' work. Obviously, we didn't. I don't agree to a day at a time, though. (Mark, Relief Crane Driver).

Summary: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation

The majority of waterfront workers consented to managerial control in determining the broader organisational requirements through their acceptance of new employment practices such as casualisation and the use of the B Roster wharfies. They did not legitimate the practices, though, and such legitimacy as they were accorded was based on the grounds that the union had entered into an agreement with management. In addition, while working towards management-defined productivity objectives, the survey group reiterated their expectation of within-job control - not legitimating management's intrusion into that area. One notable feature associated with the area of within-job control was the traditional role of union rules in structuring job performance guidelines. It was previously proposed that workers' individual control over the job was based on within-job expertise, and this seems to have been enhanced and formalised through collective control over rule-making via union rules about work practices: Rules which the waterfront workers are subsequently breaking in the interests of greater productivity.154

Granting Legitimation and withholding Consent

The following section examines how workers generally legitimise management's right to control the labour process, but don't consent to all

154 In terms of the earlier observation about individual control, it would seem that workers may be according their own judgement and expertise about what is proper within-job conduct and applying it to what was previously seen by waterfront workers as the union's legitimate sphere of control. In this case, then, it appears that management-defined productivity objectives are being consented to at the expense of the legitimate sphere of union influence over how the job is conducted. The union's legitimate role to negotiate on behalf of the workforce and have those negotiations upheld in good faith, however, is illustrated by the workers' consenting to working with casual labour, provided it is unionised casual labour.
particularities. Table 6.6 indicates how workers act to express their lack of consent and in what areas such lack of consent might be experienced. It can be seen that most waterfront workers would support each other if such support was deemed necessary (q.29), and were overwhelmingly in favour of taking action to preserve the work group's existing functions (q.27). These stated predispositions are consistent with the traditional industrial relationship associated with the waterfront - wharfies have long been considered to fear no threat from voicing their collective disapproval.

![Table 6.6](image)

Table 6.6: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent: Waterfront Workers. (n=50).

Indicating their dissatisfaction about work, but without questioning the legitimacy of the control structures which make them unavoidable, seventy-two percent of waterfront workers perceived work problems to be
inevitable (q.20), but the way they are dealt with indicates the legitimacy workers accorded the new methods of conflict resolution (which, arguably, benefits management by not withholding labour power) while not consenting to management's control to make unilateral or arbitrary decisions. That a majority (52%) of workers would not work to rule if disgruntled (q25) supports this interpretation, suggesting that workers are legitimating the consensual problem-solving approaches inherent in the EBAs. The following comments illustrate this perspective.

'It's a different ballgame now. Once, if you had problems you'd be at the gate. Now, it's negotiation. You've got to have a few brains now to argue with a lot of barristers and that. When we were in the Pool you were "just a wharfie". Now we discuss things and you can sit down and talk. If one party's not toeing the line and they won't talk to you it won't work like that. You've got to negotiate what you want.' (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

Prior to the EBA I was a very staunch delegate, and I still am. But I put a lot of emphasis on consultation and cooperation now. If I have a problem, I go straight to management and if we can't sort it out it goes straight to the consultative committee. Before, it used to escalate. (Michael, Crane Driver).

We're split into different groups with our own EBAs now so we work out our own problems with the employer. (Clem, General Hand).

The union are like a bunch of girl guides now. They're less militant, but they still achieve things. They do it in a more refined way. They have their own sort of politicians. (Laurie, Tradesperson).

The union's not as powerful, which is bad, but they're better educated and they can hold their own in any court of law. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

The legitimacy may be accorded from the combination of a sense of fair play and also a pragmatic understanding of how likely a show of strength is to be successful - the ball is well and truly in the employer's court now, and the workers are prepared to concede that this round of the game is not going to be won by the union team. The rules of the game are considered legitimate and the workers are prepared to abide by them to the extent that the other team is still playing by them. A few workers
talked about the need for strength in numbers, but most showed that the means of expressing disapproval, as well as conflict resolution, were changing. Keith represented the traditional viewpoint; Danny, the transition; and Louie and Greg, the contemporary approach.

*The union hasn’t got the clout that they had before and they’ve seen what’s happened over East. They would have to think very carefully before having a stoppage.* (Keith, General Hand).

*We haven’t got the numbers and industrial laws have changed so you’ve got to have a good reason to go out on strike these days and that rarely happens.* (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

*It’s all fought out in the Commission now and you have to hope the Commissioner sees it your way. Ninety-nine percent of the time, decisions go against us.* (Louie, Relief Crane Driver).

*We haven’t got a leg to stand on now - it’s a legal binding agreement and if we break it the employer can do us.* (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).

Bill and Dennis suggested how the change had come about.

*The bosses are a bit stronger now with the unemployment situation.* (Bill, General Hand).

*The bosses have got the power now.* (Dennis, Crane Driver).

Question 26 seeks to establish how many workers were doing what they were required to do, but would prefer to work elsewhere. A large majority (88%) disagreed and, though they were finding management unpredictable (q.36, 74%), workers were prepared to remain with the employers they’d chosen (q.35), most respondents (78%) not wishing even to change to another employer on the wharf.

Although they had previously indicated that they would bend union rules in order to achieve better productivity outcomes, the majority (60%) of workers did not ascribe to the view that they would bend rules simply in order to work more quickly (q.22). In this, some workers were legitimating the new *ways* of working, but were not consenting to an
incursion of management control over their within-job effort, as the following comments indicate.

*I'm working just the same as I always have. You can only do so much each. Multiskilling makes the difference. When there were two shore hands you would be here all day to unpack two containers because no one wanted the work.* (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

*The hours are longer when we do work, but we're not working any harder.* (Bob, Crane Driver).

Waterfront workers were generally conscientious about the basic effort required in a job, but a majority (58%) believed that work could become too demanding at times and, if it did, workers should legitimately take a sickie (q.21), again indicating their control over effort. A substantial minority (38%), though, did not agree with this perspective. The attitude of those in the survey group who had experienced double-headers provided a good indication how the basic role of management’s allocation of labour could be accompanied by a withholding of consent in the particularity of worker effort, and the effects of putting in more than a worker felt was desirable:

*Double-headers are good at the moments because they're voluntary. But I won't agree if you have to do them.* (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

*They're fine, Monday to Friday, but don't expect me to work weekends.* (Mark, Relief Crane Driver).

**Summary: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent**

While still expressing their lack of consent to management control over particular aspects of their working experience, waterfront workers appeared to legitimate the new methods of conflict resolution arising from the reform process, which put the withdrawal of labour power as a last, rather than a first, resort. Similarly, workers seemed to legitimate new work methods, while withholding their consent from particular demands upon them, particularly in terms of their work effort. It was suggested that this legitimacy might have arisen, at least in part, from a sense of fair play and pragmatism - the employer held the cards at present and workers would play with the hand they had been dealt.
Withholding Consent and Legitimation

This section examines the boundary beyond which workers will not tolerate any incursion of management control, neither consenting to nor legitimising management interference in what workers perceive to be their sphere of control over their own labour process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree %</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>No opinion %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree %</th>
<th>Missing %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q7. I can avoid new methods if I don't want to do them.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23. I'll avoid new ways if they make work harder.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24. More worker participation in change is needed here.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28. I avoid doing things if there's no reason.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30. Mgt need to recall that I'm an individual. General rules won't always apply.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q31. I try to interpret rules in the best way for my job.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q33. I know what a fair day's work is and I should determine it.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q34. If the rules go against them, I'll stick to the ways I know.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.7: Withholding Consent and Legitimation: Waterfront Workers. (n=50).

Determining Effort

As Table 6.7 shows, the waterfront survey group indicated once again that they did not consent to or legitimate management's determination of effort - it was up to workers to determine what constituted a fair day's
work (q.33), according to 76% of the sample. This view was supported by what could be described as management's perceived "effort insatiability".

You can't trust 'em to know when to stop. They still always want to pull a buck. (Mark, Relief Crane Driver).

They're keen to push you to further limits. (Kelvin, Leading Hand).

They always want one more bite of the cake. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

It was earlier proposed that there was a well-developed sense of history in operation on the wharf and in no area was it as noticeable as in perceived work effort.

I don't mind doing something now. Before, I had to hang around and wait and when I got a job I didn't want to do it then. But now, it's more money and I'm working with a better bunch of guys and I don't want to let the side down. If one slacks off, the others have to carry 'her'. (Martin, General Hand).

We don't say, "bugger the company" and go slow because of the bonus. The company tries to put things in our head. Like, you hear "we lost that job - [C Shed] undercut us". This is what the wharfies are saying. So the companies are planting these things in our heads. The wharfies are talking about these things in the pub as though it was their company. As though it was part of their money that was getting involved. Three years ago, they'd puncture tyres and laugh. (Paddy, General Hand).

I'm more keen - I take more interest in the job rather than just plodding along. (Kelvin, Leading Hand).

Oh yes. I'm more conscientious. I'm working virtually all the time. If you haven't changed your attitude you should've got out. You have to be prepared to do everything now. (George, General Hand).

As has already been seen, many workers felt they had really increased their work effort since the reforms had been introduced and, given their commitment to the objectives of the reforms, were confident in the

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155 Sexism is alive and well on the Fremantle waterfront - that good Aussie saying, "Come on, don't be a girl" is often used to motivate fellow-workers to greater efforts.
workers' legitimate right to determine their own work effort - and to have that effort deemed sufficient by management.

Determining Change
Question 24, assessing whether workers felt they should be able to participate more in change, delivered the strongest response in the survey, with 50% of the sample strongly agreeing that they should have more participation and a total of 92% in favour of the idea overall. Workers often felt they could see gaps in the system which would prevent or impede the facilitiation of organisational and industry goals.

It's obvious to me that we need more room here and the planning could be improved. Our machinery is old too. (Davy, Crane Driver).

People running the top jobs here don't seem to understand what's involved on the wharf. Here you just don't see management till the last year. Take the machinery. It's so old. We've got a couple of machines here that were banned over East. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

There's some teething problems, like the proper use of the workforce. We could have a roster system, for example. (Colin, Tradesperson).

We could use a bit more stuff like a metal press and a set of rollers so we don't have to send stuff out. (Alan, Tradesperson).

It's a problem with the bad planning on a ship and the faulty gear - either on the ships or the machines we use. (Mark, Relief Crane Driver).

Again, comments from the workforce suggested that workers felt they had much to contribute; and their contribution could enhance the achievement of organisational objectives.

Extent of Compliance
The majority (70%) of the survey group indicated that they would seek the most propitious interpretation of rules as they applied to their own job (q.31) and the interpretation was generally felt to be needed because of the expertise the worker had in the job.
We've got sheets that tell you what to do and they're written by people who aren't on the job so you don't always go exactly according to plan, you do something different that works better. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

Part of the expertise lay in knowing the job boundaries.

I do take a bit more responsibility for the decision-making in the job now, but it's important to only do your job and not try to move in on other people's job, or the plot of the job falls away and you start making mistakes. (Jerry, Crane Driver).

Question 30 asked workers whether they felt that management should remember they were individuals and that general rules would not always apply. The sample was split, with 60% agreeing with the proposition and 38% disagreeing, and the interpretation of their responses illustrates the complexity of this issue for waterfront workers. On the one hand, workers may not consent to or legitimate a management incursion over a worker's ability or right to apply general principles as appropriate within the conduct of their job.

Okay, you've got no control over how much time the job is booked for, but you can control the time it takes to do it. (Ray, Tradesperson).

I will do some stuff but there's a limit. Multiskilling is okay. We've all got to be multiskilled and, fair enough, it's their labour force and they should be entitled to do what they think fit. But this TQS stuff is totally useless. There's no way at all I'd ever refer back to that. It's no benefit to me at all. Anything about the industry is okay, but why do they want us to do all this other stuff? (Mark, Relief Crane Driver).156

On the other hand, workers may, by denying the collectivism implied by the equality of treatment in general rules, be upholding management's right to individualise the employment relationship - thereby consenting to and legitimating a relationship with management in which particular workers are singled out from the crowd and rewarded appropriately. The response to the new classification system, which differentiates between

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156 A Total Quality Systems initiative was in place at A Shed at the time of the survey.
grades, provides a good example of how waterfront workers feel about these issues.

The grading system is very fair if you're prepared to learn all the categories. The keener a chap is, the higher he gets. (George, General Hand).

It's working quite good. I think it gives you the chance to train yourself and it gives you the incentive. The union wants people to be multiskilled - it's all mechanical and clerical now. If you can't do it you're lost. Before, guys who done nothing were on the same pay. The forklift drivers who did the work got the same pay as the others. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

It's good. It recognises your skills. (Craig, Leading Hand).

In disagreeing with the proposition that management needs to remember the individual and that general rules should not apply, workers may be reflecting the strength that they perceive has come from the traditionally collective focus on the wharf. In this case, then, disagreeing with individualism is sending a strong message of withholding consent and legitimation from what are seen as divisive management policies. Again, the grading system provides an illustration of the point.

It's not very good. Everyone can do the same work but the company puts them in a different grade - and the company chooses the grade. It's not fair. (Bill, General Hand).

Sometimes they cause problems - jealousies. Not everyone can go in one grade. (Nicolo, General Hand).

It's a very sore point among some people with adequate qualifications who are not graded properly. But they're bringing in people from over East who are higher grades than our people. This is really going to cause problems. "Specialists" they call them. The men are starting to get the "them and us" again and I don't want that. The EBA was made for a competition between men and we're trying to even that out and get it split between everyone. But it's a struggle, and the men aren't helping. They've called for volunteers to work Christmas Day. And they'll get 'em! What it has come down to here is the Almighty Quid. There are blokes down here who would bite off your arm for a quid! (Ted, Crane Driver).
It's okay in our shop, we're all on the same grade!
(Stewart, Tradesperson).

A series of questions (q.7, 23, 28 and 34) assessed workers' intentions to implement changes even if doing so would mean going against the worker's better judgement. The majority consented to and legitimated management's right to have the changes implemented even if they made work harder, were contrary to the way workers had been taught, or if workers simply did not wish to do them. This is quite an extensive compliance, as the following comments illustrate.

It's part of my job to do what the computer tells me to do. I don't like it but that's how it is. The computer here is god. (Paul, Crane Driver).

Everyone realised these changes were coming about. We all voted on it, so you just have to pull your head in and do it. The wharf is a team - you can bust your gut. If the boxes are coming at you, you have to work to keep up. (Mark, Relief Crane Driver).

I've got less control over my time now but that's what it's become. You can't just sit around and do nothing any more - you have to be working all the time. You're forced to do the jobs when they're there. (Graham, Manifest Clerk).

You pretty well always have had a lot of control down here. If you wanted to go slow, you'd go slow. But now, you have to move or people start talking about you - your own work mates! You're a "good man" now if you hurry. (Bill, General Hand).

We'll even attach a wire to a forklift to get steel out of the container. Once upon a time, a waterside worker would never attach anything to a forklift. (Keith, General Hand).

A minority of workers (q.7, 23, 34) did not consent to or legitimate the implementation of new work methods which were contrary to their better judgement.

I don't want to work. Full stop. I like it less than before. They've really shot morale here with all this reform. It's up to shit half the time and for what? A lot of blokes go
flat out and you do yourself out of Saturday and Sunday. (Bill, Relief Crane Driver).

We can’t do any more. We cut as many corners as we can already. This is all a direct result of the cutting of the labour force and there is no more that we can do. (Tom, Leading Hand).

There’s things I won’t do, but it’s not like that for most people now with the productivity bonus. I don’t like it for safety reasons. Before, once you black banned the forklift because of brakes or something, no-one would drive it. Now, someone else will just jump on. But I won’t. It’s not worth it. (Dennis, Crane Driver).

I have to have control over how I work the crane. I know that they want more productivity and so do I for my pride of work. But for my comfort, I have to judge the pace myself. A shock comes up through the wires [on the crane] if you’re too quick! (Glen, Relief Crane Driver).

Summary: Withholding Consent and Legitimation
The waterfront survey group indicated again that they did not consent to or legitimate management's role in determining effort, and stridently urged their own participation in change. That their right to participate was based on the workers' expertise in the job reinforces the trend that they have displayed throughout this study. However, once change has been effected, the respondents indicated they were willing to implement them, often citing due process as justification for their compliance. Only when the new work methods made work too dangerous or when workers could not see any possibility of the change making any difference to productivity or outcomes would they withhold their consent and legitimation.

There was a mixed response to individualism on the waterfront, with consent and legitimation withheld from management's attempts to individualise the workforce in a large minority of cases. Where individualism was upheld, it was seen to be a complex blend of a desire to be recognised for their efforts which workers directed towards organisational objectives and a statement in favour of a worker's ability
to make sound and appropriate decisions with respect to the way their job articulated with organisational and industry goals.

Summary: Legitimation and Consent on the Wharf
Workers in the waterfront survey group have broadly indicated their desire for job control and this has been expressed throughout the preceding discussion as a desire for within-job control; as a belief that workers were better placed than management to determine the terms of the immediate effort bargain. This desire for job control could be expressed either individually or collectively, was based on expertise and, particularly, on the expertise which workers felt they held in determining how best their job could articulate with organisational objectives and the goals of the reform process.

Similarly, workers gave high levels of legitimacy and consent to the rationale for change - being overwhelmingly supportive of a competitive and viable waterfront. To this end, workers consented to and legitimated management's role in managing the 'big picture' - management should aggressively seek out new contracts and workers would do their utmost to decrease turnaround times in order to see those customers retained. To the extent that achieving this objective meant stepping outside union policy, there was a good chance that workers would do just that. This was supported by a widespread legitimation of the new methods of conflict resolution - methods which would see the Port operating during a dispute.

However, although a majority saw management and workers working together towards legitimate organisational goals, the employers have not always succeeded in convincing the workforce that management manages as it does from purely rational and objective motives. While workers generally saw themselves as having the interests of the industry at heart, and working consistently towards the reform objectives, they were not always prepared to accord management's agenda the same degree of disinterested effort. To the extent that management was seen to be operating from a hidden agenda, or if workers perceived management strategies would thwart the objectives of the reform process, they would withhold their legitimation and/or consent to management control.
WORKERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES OF WATERFRONT REFORM AT FREMANTLE

Workers' Perceptions Of The Change Imperative

The microeconomic imperatives of waterfront reform provided the context wherein the changes on the Fremantle waterfront occurred. Widely discussed in the public arena and through company and union media, there was a relatively consistent perception by the waterfront survey group of the rationale for change on the Fremantle waterfront. In such a large-scale, internationally prevalent reform process as waterfront reform, the vested interests in the outcomes of reform are many and varied. As was noted at the commencement of this chapter, very powerful players were involved in the orchestration of change on the Australian waterfront. Each of the main parties articulated their imperatives for change and it is of interest to this study to see how workers appeared to interpret that information; and to which of those imperatives they gave greater credence and legitimacy.

Arguably, one of the most noticeable changes to occur on the wharf was the reduction in the labour force. This was an integral part of the reform strategy and the loss of largely older, experienced wharfies must have implications for not only the conduct of operations but also for the future culture on the waterfront. Indeed, the revitalisation of the waterfront was directly linked in the reform process with the need to create a "super wharfie" culture on the Australian docks and could therefore be considered politically, as well as efficiency, motivated. Thus, the workers' interpretation of the need for a smaller workforce is inherently interesting as their perception of the validity of the motives behind it may well influence the development of a waterfront culture which facilitates or impedes that particular reform objective and, hence, the attainment of other objectives which flow from it. The following discussion will commence with a broad view by contemplating workers' perceptions of the general imperatives which drove the reform process, then will consider the survey group's understanding of reductions in the manning levels on the wharf.
WHY WERE THESE CHANGES MADE?

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<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both efficiency and cost-cutting</td>
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<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To cut costs</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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Table 6.9: Waterfront Workers' Perceptions of the Imperatives for Change.

The Efficiency Imperative

Table 6.9 shows that the majority (54%) of the waterfront sample distinguished between efficiency (with its implication of reduced costs, through doing more with less) and cost-cutting; ascribing efficiency as the main reform imperative. Even the minority views of cost-cutting and other combinations of reasons, though, held some notion that the waterfront did need to change its traditional ways. Throughout the survey group there was a common perception that, even though employers would take whatever they could possibly get from the process, the reforms were, in general, "fair enough". It has already been shown that a widespread legitimacy was accorded to the objectives of the waterfront reform process and this legitimacy is echoed here as workers explain why the changes were essential.

The efficiency imperative could refer to the need to become multiskilled or work more consistently and thus increase productivity, usually for economic reasons associated with being a competitive port - part of that competitiveness meaning that more had to be done with less.

*It was for efficiency. We've been trained on the forklift so we can drive it if we've been fixing it.* (Alan, Tradesperson).

*It was because of the economic climate that we had to change our ways.* (Paul, Crane Driver).
The quicker we get the cargo in and out of the shed, the better off we are. (Keith, General Hand).

The efficiency imperative could be less well-defined; some respondents perceiving that in general things were just 'not efficient'.

Well, we weren't very efficient on the wharf. (Michael, Crane Driver).

We were fairly well inefficient before. (Bill, General Hand).

These changes had to be made. It was as simple as that. (Graham, Manifest Clerk).

Other respondents saw inefficiencies in the deployment of labour on the wharf, and felt that previous work practices needed to be changed.

It was for efficiency, but probably for necessity as well. There were blokes standing around doing bugger all and getting paid for it. (Jim, Tradesperson).

There was a lot of dead wood. It might've been a touch inefficient before! (Bill, Relief Crane Driver).

There were that many people sitting back doing nothing. Pressure was put on people down on the waterfront to get things done. It's more so in Sydney and Melbourne. We're much better here. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

The main reasons for the reforms were to get rid of the old attitudes and demarcation issues. (Ted, Crane Driver).

They wanted to get rid of the men. The foreman, for example, had no skills, he just had to point. And the glut man only did one thing - he put the steel on the glut. (George, General Hand).

The waterfront survey group could thus be seen to ascribe considerable legitimacy to the reform imperative; that legitimacy resting on efficiency imperatives to at least some degree.
Decreasing the Workforce

One way in which efficiency and cost-cutting imperatives can be expressed is in the reduction of the workforce. Table 6.10 shows that three main reasons were given by the waterfront survey group for the reduction in the Fremantle workforce: the effects on work organisation arising from the WIRA initiatives and as expressed in subsequent EBAs (31%); because of the increasing trend towards mechanisation and containerisation (31%) and, thus, to manning levels reflecting the less labour intensive stevedoring process (21%) - though the distinctions between categories are artificial, as it was generally a combination of factors which workers perceived to explain the reductions, as is evident in their comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY WAS THERE A REDUCTION IN THE WORKFORCE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Because of the WIRA or EBA</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Containerisation or technology</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overmanned or outdated work methods</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost cutting</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 48 cases</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.10: Waterfront Workers' Perceptions of the Reasons for a Smaller Workforce.

The first group of workers in Table 6.10 considered the labour force reduction a legitimate requirement of the reform process. The WIRA's principal direct effect on the reduction of the labour force was its provision for payouts to retiring waterside workers. The payouts enabled some workers to leave the wharf earlier than they would have otherwise been able and, indeed, were created for that purpose.

A lot of blokes had reached the age of retirement and decided to get out. A lot of them had had enough and wanted to go. (Martin, General Hand).
The EBAs cemented the practice of multiskilling and decreasing demarcations which had begun some years earlier with award restructuring and introduced the notion of a double-headed shift, and some respondents attributed the labour reductions to these sources.

Too right it's got smaller. I dunno why. A better way of doing things? We don't need as many blokes now - wharfies are allowed to do double-headers. (Clem, General Hand).

It's really dropped off dramatically because of multiskilling and job practices. One man does several jobs now. Where a foreman would watch one man do a job before you've got a job now and it's your responsibility. A lot of guys wouldn't fathom it on the outside, how it was before! (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

I feel it's got smaller because of multiskilling. Before, you had restrictive work practices which kept them here. They had to get rid of the old blokes to have any success in the reform because they would've resisted the change. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

We were stuck in the old regime of one-man-one-job before. (David, Crane Driver).

Mechanisation and containerisation do mean that the wharf requires less labour to handle the cargo, but there are still jobs which remain labour intensive - one example being the live sheep cargo. However, many workers perceived modern work methods to require less workers on the wharf.

We had 98 men and now we've only got 37. We just had to cut down on the Manning scale. Most of the work is in containers now and there's better ships so you don't need the men. (George, General Hand).

Blokes who've retired haven't been replaced here. We used to have a lot of blokes who weren't needed. There used to be a [trades assistant] for every tradesman. (Alan, Tradesperson).

Plenty of 'em weren't really working at all! (Kevin, Tradesperson).

We were definitely overmanned. Where you needed one, you had two before. (Bill, General Hand).
A lot of unnecessary jobs were eliminated. Jobs were held to a certain level because of custom and history. (Steve, General Hand).
They were able to get rid of a lot of blokes because of the EBA and mechanisation and computerisation and all that modern thinking and planning. And they've got good lawyers! (Greg, Crane Driver).

As Greg's comment suggests, there were some respondents who did not accord the reduction in the workforce such legitimacy, suggesting that mechanisation and containerisation, rather than being value-free efficiency techniques were chosen by employers deliberately to decrease the labour cost and the employer's dependence on labour.

They wanted to work with the minimum amount of people and bring in casuals. (Louie, Relief Crane Driver).

Everyone's gone. They said they wanted to rejuvenate the industry. What they meant was they wanted to save money - save money on wages. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

For a while now there's been no replacement on deaths or retirement. But now with the WIRA, it's to save money. They want more labour when it's busy but not when it isn't. (Ted, Crane Driver).

However, even this view could be tempered by a perception that previous manning levels were generous.

It's what the boss wants - now there's mechanisation, there's less jobs. Mind you, it was possibly overmanned before. (Davy, Crane Driver).

The reduction in the Fremantle labour force was generally seen as a legitimate employer response to outdated work practices and consequent manning levels, though the survey group did perceive the advantages which management could and did take of modern technology.

Summary: The Reform Imperatives
The waterfront reform process was seen to arise from an efficiency imperative associated with the need for Fremantle to be a competitive and viable Australian port. To the extent that reform strategies such as multiskilling through a reduction in demarcations, decreased manning
levels and continuing mechanisation were pursued by employers in the interests of that increased competitiveness, waterfront workers in the sample considered the reforms legitimate. Indeed, so widespread was the perceived "need" for reform that even cost-cutting imperatives were generally perceived to be complemented by genuine efficiency motives.

The Reform Process

The waterfront workers' satisfaction with the process of reform was examined by inquiring into

- who respondents perceived to be responsible for the changes;
- the survey group's explanations for the lack of disputation associated with the reform process;
- whether respondent workers found the changes disruptive and their levels of apprehension associated with the process and outcomes of the reform initiatives;
- the respondents' knowledge of the progress of enterprise bargaining;
- the timing of prior notification of pending changes; and
- whether the survey group felt they had had input into the changes.

The Responsibility for Change

The survey group generally considered either management or the government to have played the biggest role in initiating the changes (Table 6.11) and there was some indication that workers understood the complexity of the interactions between the three major parties to the WIRA negotiations.

The bosses were on the government's back. (Davy, Crane Driver).

The government informed the unions - shape up or ship out. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

The reform really came about because of the pressure applied by importers, primary producers and small business on the government. (Glen, Crane Driver).

It came from a joint delegation which went to Europe. (Colin, Tradesperson).
WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHANGES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The union and employer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The union</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 42 cases.</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.11: Waterfront Workers' Perceptions of Responsibility for Change.

The union would've pushed for it because the brothers over East had it. (Alan, Tradesperson).

Everyone was responsible. The wharfies showed what they can do. The management has gone out and promoted the Depot and said that the men will give you this service and we get letters saying we're good. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

These comments suggest that the responsibility for reform may lie in the first instance with the initiators, who are often responding to a complex set of pressures. The workforce, though, has a role in ensuring the success or otherwise of those reforms, as Lloyd indicated, even if they did not begin the process.

The Lack of Disputation in Reform

As indicated in Table 6.12, workers most commonly felt that the reform process was accompanied without much upheaval because the changes were widely considered inevitable, but this sense of inevitability arose from different sources.
HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE LACK OF DISPUTATION ASSOCIATED WITH THE REFORM PROCESS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The changes were inevitable</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The union was in control of the process</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change was inevitable and we had no choice</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 49 cases.</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.12: Waterfront Workers' Explanations of Lack of Disputation Associated with the Change Process.

Times were changing and that was the way it was going to be. The union recommended us to vote 'yes' - they said they'd done the best they could do. (Bill, General Hand).

With so much unemployment, it was inevitable. (Willie, General Hand).

Everyone realised it had to happen. The older people had some small disputes but nothing much. (David, Crane Driver).

The changes were inevitable and necessary. (Jerry, Crane Driver). We all knew it had to come. We had to vote on the contract, but the employers had the last say. We lost the glut men - gave them away for other things. They used to stand around and wait for the forks before, now they can drive them. Sometimes the man who was on the fork would wait two days in the smoko room before we needed him again. Things had to change. There could be six men down below doing nothing. (George, General Hand).

In some instances, the changes were considered not only inevitable but that workers had no choice but to accept them without too much resistance.

The federal caucus of the union realised we would have been defeated in arbitration if it had come to that. They instructed us to go along with the changes. The
employers have got the whip hand now. Like if the unions are on top, the employers have to go along with them. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

A lot was done behind the scenes. It was put to me, accept this or you might not have a job. (Jim, General Hand).

If we didn't accept the changes there wouldn't have been any union. The pilot's dispute\textsuperscript{157} was hanging over our heads, and the standard of the workforce outside the waterfront and the worldwide economic climate were against us. (Patrick, General Hand).

Twenty-five percent of the sample felt that the relatively smooth reform process was due to the union's expertise and attitude at the bargaining table.

The union was diplomatic in negotiations with the companies. It was all cat and mouse for the first twelve months and there was always the threat that we'd have to take action. But we never did. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

The union were trying to show they were prepared to negotiate and keep a low profile. (Paul, Crane Driver).

We had good leadership at the federal level of the WWF. (Jack, General Hand).

The union would rather have you working while they negotiate. (Laurie, Tradesperson).

They ran into a bit of strife with the EBA but the union and management fought it out there and then and didn't bring it down to the workforce. (Martin, General Hand).

Workers also offered a number of other explanations for the lack of disputation.

The reforms gave a lot of people the opportunity to be multiskilled which is good because you can get the job done easier and quicker and it's the way it should be and we knew it. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

\textsuperscript{157} In 1989, the Hawke Labor government had joined with the ACTU and the employers in not supporting the pilots in their attempt to negotiate wage increases outside the government's wage-setting guidelines. This concerted attack led to the widespread dismissal of striking pilots and considerable financial hardship for their union.
It was because the government put up a lot of money to retire the older people out of the industry. And we wanted them to have it. (Colin, Tradesperson).

There was good planning and foresight in comparison with the UK and New Zealand. Obviously we were learning from their errors. (Robbie, General Hand).

Disruption and Apprehension
Table 6.13 indicates how disruptive the sample group found the reforms. Twenty one percent of respondents experienced some disruption in the ability to perform their job; eighty percent considering the reform process did not interfere with their ability to perform their job at all. The only comments which were offered by the survey groups related to the personal disruption they had experienced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF DISRUPTION EXPERIENCED</th>
<th>PERSONAL DISRUPTION CAUSED BY REFORMS</th>
<th>DISRUPTION TO YOUR ABILITY TO PERFORM YOUR JOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of workers</td>
<td>% of sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not disruptive</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little disruptive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Disruptive</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.13: The Extent of Disruption Waterfront Workers Experienced as a Result of the Reforms.

Around forty percent of the sample found the reforms personally disruptive to some degree; the main complaint being that the job had started to intrude too greatly into family life. New rostering arrangements were the major problem, but the pressures and anxieties associated with the reform process and new ways of working also had an impact.

*It’s been very disruptive for me. You just can’t plan socially at all.* (Glen, Relief Crane Driver).
I haven't got as much time at home as before. (Jerry, Crane Driver).

The hours are longer and there's not much social life, and I'm on 24 hour call so you can't really plan anything. (Ted, Crane Driver).

You take your job home with you at night with all this stuff going on. It's very disruptive. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

Part of the disruption which was experienced was due to the apprehension workers in the sample felt prior to the reforms' implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WERE YOU APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 43 cases.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.14: Waterfront Workers' Apprehensiveness prior to the Changes.

Table 6.14 shows that a small majority of workers reported some apprehension prior to the changes, and that their apprehension was largely associated with the changes to work practices and the safety concerns arising from them is evidenced in the following comments:

158 Safety is a big issue on the wharf, particularly as the intensification of work increases as employers urge and encourage higher tonnages through the introduction of incentive payments. North Quay is decidedly unsafe for anyone on foot, and most yards have lines where pedestrians can walk only with care. Inside the cargo sheds, the lighting is often poor and forklifts move quickly and haphazardly from bay to bay. Add to this mixture the presence of large freight and container trucks, cranes and any number of smaller vehicles and even the ground is a dangerous place to be. The dockside stevedoring operations are even worse, and this intrepid researcher watched all from the safety of an upstairs clerk's room. Cranes are as tall as multistorey buildings; the cab attained by climbing a steel ladder up its full height. As cargo is lifted onto or from the deck, it is attached and observed by workers in seemingly perilous circumstances. The Singapore port is notorious on the Fremantle wharf for its practice of allowing stevedores to jump on the containers and attach wires while they are hanging in mid-air from the crane. There apparently have been a lot of deaths from this practice which is designed to increase cargo throughput rates. The men are worried that it is that type of unsafe practice which employers will eventually tolerate here.
Safety is my biggest worry now. Safety can slip away with multiskilling. (Jerry, Crane Driver).
There are more cuts ahead and unsafe work practices. (Dean, General Hand).

A large minority, though, were not apprehensive and the workers' comments show how this was associated with the legitimacy accorded to the change process.

I could see what was needed. I used to get frustrated when I had to sit on a fork and wasn't able to get out and help someone put some cartons on a pallet. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

Knowing what you've got to do to earn a quid outside, I was aware of the inefficiencies down here but I had to keep quiet about it - you know what I mean? So I wasn't worried at all when the WIRA came along. (Keith, General Hand).

I was on a shop committee in Melbourne and I read the WIRA. I saw multiskilling as a positive step. I embraced the idea of multiskilling and saw it as a challenge to the union to see it go through. (Joe, General Hand).

The extra money which workers anticipated would be attached to the EBAs facilitated some respondents' lack of apprehension.

I knew there had to be changes. It was exciting when they explained how the money was going to be better. But it hasn't worked out fair. (Archie, Relief Crane Operator).

I've had the view for a long time now that I'd like to earn more money without losing conditions. A stoppage which lost a day's pay is a lot when you're on the fine line. (Jim, General Hand).

As Table 6.15 indicates, most respondents had overcome their apprehensiveness by the time this study was conducted. There was a measure of resignation and residual uncertainty, though, as the following comments show.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARE YOU STILL APPEHENSIVE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 23 cases.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.15: Waterfront Workers' Remaining Sense of Apprehensiveness.

I'm okay about it now, but I'm a bit uncertain still about what's going to happen. It looks like they keep putting the training back and back. (Kevin, Tradesperson).

Nah. I don't care anymore. I've been brainwashed into it. (Ray, Tradesperson).

I wasn't apprehensive, but I was uncertain about what was going to happen. And now, well, I don't know how I feel - whether I'm apprehensive. I don't know. (Paul, Crane Driver).

I still have some reservations about the lack of men and bringing in non-union men, but I wouldn't say I was apprehensive, no. (Bob, Crane Driver).

The Enterprise Bargaining Process
As indicated in Table 6.16, half the waterfront sample declared that they were aware of what was happening during the course of the negotiation phase of the enterprise bargaining process. Certainly, many workers indicated that there were frequent meetings on the wharf which were designed to give information to the workforce; others were able to give insight into the actual negotiation process, or the way the company or union packaged the information for general distribution.

Up to a point, we were pretty well-informed. A lot of this you could see coming a couple of years ago. (Jerry, Crane Driver).

There was a little lack of information sometimes, but generally we were kept informed. (Kelvin, Leading Hand).
You were kept in touch with things. They gave you talks - went through the booklets with you in small groups organised by the union and the [employer]. (Laurie, Tradesperson).

I was on the committee to go through it for about 18 months. I didn’t talk to the company though. We allocated two men to go to the bosses. You had to take the good with the bad - take it as a whole package. (Bill, General Hand).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you know what was happening during the process of enterprise bargaining?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wasn’t interested</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 50 cases.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.16: Workers’ Knowledge of the Progress of Enterprise Bargaining Negotiations.

Knowledge, like beauty, appears to be in the eye of the beholder. One person’s adequate information is another person’s feeling of neglect.

Yeah, we were informed. We had lots of meetings and feedback in pamphlets. (Jim, Tradesperson).

No. I don’t think we were well informed at all. The only feedback we got was from stopwork meetings and pamphlets. (Alan, Tradesperson).

Thirty percent of the sample were like Alan; they felt as though they were not adequately informed of the negotiations, and often felt they were called upon to vote on the EBA without having time to give the document proper consideration.

We weren’t properly informed really. We were given reports but these were based on the entire industry. The
package was read out one morning in an hour flat and we had to vote on it straight away. We were instructed to vote "yes". They shoved it down our necks. We only half heard it, to be honest. [The union secretary] is not one of my favourite people. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

No, we didn’t know much. Well, to a certain extent we did. The book came out one day and we were voting on it the next. (Mark, Relief Crane Driver).159

I believed the Brick. I voted against both. I think the Reader’s Digest version can be manipulated too and it has. The men wanted to see the older guys go out with a good deal and that’s why it went ahead. (Glen, Relief Crane Driver).

Freo didn’t get much info. The union here either didn’t know or didn’t confer with the men. (Paddy, General Hand).

I had no idea. We were treated like mushrooms. (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).
Nothing went before the membership body. People wanted to let the old blokes go with a decent quid and put their hands up for anything. It was such a drawn-out process. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

The remainder of the sample group either were not interested in the negotiations, or felt they were too complicated for the average wharfie to understand and were best left to the union to worry about.

I didn’t really involve myself much because I’m not used to that sort of thing. (Robbie, General Hand).

I vaguely knew what was going on. I was happy to let our leaders sort it out. (Willie, General Hand).

159 A-Shed’s EBA was variously called "the book" or "the Reader's Digest". These terms were used in relation to the company's draft EBA. The draft document, a "real wish-list" according to A-Shed's Human Resources Manager was a publicity and psychological coup. Double-spaced, with every clause separated from the next by a cardboard divider, the whole encased in a glossy cover and around 8cm thick, it was colloquially and not too fondly known as "the Brick". According to the Human Resources Manager, the Brick was designed to give the impression that the employer had a very clear idea of the direction the reforms should take, and was going to bargain from a strong and decisive position. It certainly had an impact. One job delegate remarked that "the bloody Brick nearly knocked us for six. It took us ages to get over that. Half the bloody men nearly dropped dead right then. Jeez, the bastards (oh, sorry, love). [Laughs]. Yep, they got us with that one, well and truly".
A lot of it went over my head, to be honest. (Jim, General Hand).

I should've made myself aware, but we left it all to the committee. (Harry, Trades Assistant).

Table 6.17 shows that most of the waterfront workers in the sample knew someone who was involved in the EBA negotiations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DID YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE ENTERPRISE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 50 cases.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.17: Waterfront Workers’ Knowledge of the Negotiators in Enterprise Bargaining.

As job delegates were generally incorporated into workplace level bargaining, this is not surprising. In addition, most of the elected officials who took part in the negotiations were well known amongst the men.

We know our union people really well here. Everybody does. (Louie, Relief Crane Driver).

The local union, though, was not always seen to be the main player in the negotiations and, notwithstanding the ostensibly local focus, the EBAs were seen to emanate from national industry-level negotiations.

The union decided what we would and wouldn’t do. The [principal negotiating industrial officer] came over from the East and explained it to us and asked for problems and things. (Keith, General Hand).

It was just our union federally. Our branch wouldn’t have been involved. (Dean, General Hand).

Table 6.18 reflects the perceptions respondents have previously given about their knowledge of the negotiation process. Such information as was available generally came from the union, either through meetings with officials or from job delegates, or actual participation in the EBA
negotiations at the local level. The waterfront is rife with rumour, though, and the grapevine quite effectively spread alternative information around.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO WAS YOUR BEST SOURCE OF INFORMATION DURING THE PROCESS OF ENTERPRISE BARGAINING?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The union</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job delegate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapevine</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was involved</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had no source of information</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 50 cases.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.18: Waterfront Workers' Best Source of Information about the Progress of Enterprise Bargaining Negotiations.

There were plenty of sources of information - especially rumour. The union wasn't necessarily correct in all they told us. (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).

I got a lot of my information from the workers themselves. Mind you, a lot of it was hearsay and I took it with a pinch of salt. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

Along with the perception that the process was lengthy and complicated, the information about the reforms was sometimes deemed inaccurate or incomplete by the survey group; who sometimes perceived that to be a deliberate strategy by either union or employer.

I did go to meetings, but I feel I was ill-informed about what did eventuate. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

The company told us what we wanted to find out, but the union hedged on it. (Bob, Crane Driver).
The union would tell you stuff if you asked them. But the employer wasn't going to tell us a thing. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).
Table 6.19 shows that the majority (72%) of workers in the sample felt they had received a reasonable notification of the reforms and, indeed, given the widespread publicity it is inconceivable that anyone could not be aware that something was up!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DID YOU RECEIVE A REASONABLE NOTIFICATION OF THE PENDING CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 43 cases.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.19: Waterfront Workers' Perceptions of Notification of Change.

Yet nearly a third of the survey group felt they were not reasonably notified. These workers' comments indicate that the reforms were a bit like childbirth. No-one can quite adequately prepare you for the enormity of the experience.

I never believed that double headers would be able to happen. But they did. (Dennis, Crane Driver).

We're still finding out about what's in the EBA. (Davy, Crane Driver).

I got a phone call on a Saturday morning to say I didn’t get the job I'd applied for and would be G4. What a gutless way out. They paid another guy out and put him in the Pool and he didn’t get any overtime and his wages dropped from $40,000 to $25,000. He was told by the foreman on the midnight shift. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

One Monday morning, everything had changed. There was no training for the new positions. (Tom, Leading Hand).

Lots was said and written but it was bamboozling and jumbled up and no-one really knew what was going on until it happened. (Bob, Crane Driver).
We were told one day that you have to do this now because management now has the right to manage. (Matthew, Crane Driver).

When waterfront workers responded to the question summarised in Table 6.20 about their input into the change process, they were consistent in their interpretation of the question. The only source of input they sought was input via the union. What appeared from the interviews was that the union was the legitimate representative of their interests, and the appropriate party to enter into negotiations with the employers. At no time did any respondent evince the opinion that he, as an individual, should or could have had some personal role to play in determining his working conditions other than the views he expressed to union officials and delegates. Even then, the majority view should, rightly, prevail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO YOU FEEL YOU WERE ABLE TO HAVE ANY INPUT INTO THOSE CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 43 cases.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.20: Waterfront Workers' Perceptions of Input into Change.

The sample was evenly split between those respondents who felt they had had some input into the reforms and those who felt they had not had that opportunity. The "no input" group varied in their rationales for this perception.

I'm only a young bloke - they wouldn't listen to me! (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).

If it was passed in Melbourne and Sydney we had no say because our numbers were small here. (Bob, Crane Driver).

It was made up by the committee of the union. Not us. (Bill, General Hand).
The union reps only told us what they wanted us to know. There were regular meetings but they only informed us of half the story. So we had our votes, but what we didn’t know is that there’s a back-out clause everywhere. (Bob, Crane Driver).

The amount of people working in a shop is a management decision anyway. (Ray, Tradesperson).

As Table 6.21 shows, those who felt they had been able to have input into the changes generally identified union meetings as the means of making that input.

It was discussed and everyone had a chance to say something. Every morning we had a meeting and some guys didn’t come. They should have been there - it’s no good just asking me later. (Lloyd, Leading Hand and Job Delegate).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT TYPE OF INPUT INTO THE CHANGES DID YOU HAVE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I could speak at meetings</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was on the negotiating committee</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could vote at meetings</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 22</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.21: Waterfront Workers' Type of Input about Change.

Even those who did feel they had input, though, seemed to differentiate between superficial and effective input; the comments indicating that "having your say" does not necessarily equate to having an input which makes a difference to the outcomes.

Although we had our say, the union reps set your fears to rest and then the worst happened. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).
We had meetings with the union and they asked us what we wanted and said what was best for us and what they said was best for us was what went in. So I think our ideas fell on deaf ears. (Graham, Manifest Clerk).

You could have a chat with the union blokes, but it was only a Clayton's\textsuperscript{160} input really. It seemed democratic at the time but on reflection I don't think it was. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

Summary: The Process of Change
The men in the survey group considered the reforms legitimate and necessary on the whole and generally regarded the employers, government and unions to have all played a major role in effecting the changes on the waterfront. The perceived fundamental necessity of change and the alliance of these three powerful actors in the reform process all contributed to the workers' rationale for the implementation of the reforms being achieved in the absence of serious disputation. The respondents generally considered themselves well-informed about the progress of enterprise bargaining associated with the reforms, but often found the process lengthy and confusing, and the outcomes uncertain and, in some cases, surprising.

Most respondents were not overly apprehensive of, or disrupted by, the reforms. Yet, although the reforms were often welcomed, future safety standards arising from more intensive work methods caused no small concern. Workers in the survey group were largely philosophical about the input they felt able and desirable to have in the reform process. The difference between having a vote and making a difference was noted, but the union was seen as the legitimate representative of their positions and the appropriate negotiator for desirable outcomes. How workers perceived these outcomes will now be given some consideration.

Workers' Perceptions Of The Outcomes From The Reforms

Given that the waterfront survey group has consistently maintained the general view that reforms were necessary on the wharf, it is interesting to

\textsuperscript{160} Clayton's is a non-alcoholic spirit substitute for mixed drinks.
note in Table 6.22 that almost a third of the sample felt that the reforms really had nothing to offer them. The majority of workers, though, considered the reforms gave them more opportunities than they’d previously had - be that money, more skills, job security or a mixture of all three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT DO THE NEW WORK ARRANGEMENTS HAVE TO OFFER YOU?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A future with more skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money and multiskilling</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money and the chance to be part of a team</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than before</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.22: Waterfront Workers' Evaluation of what the Reform Process has to Offer Them.

Nothing to Offer

There were a number of areas where respondents felt they were, if not disadvantaged (though two workers actually felt worse off), then not particularly advantaged by the reforms, including opportunities for a career path, job protection through union solidarity, and their current and future financial position as established by the grading system\textsuperscript{161} which accompanied the EBAs.

\textsuperscript{161} No-one actually dropped their basic rate of pay as a result of the reforms, but actual gross income and incremental increases were affected. For example, if an ex-foreman was offered a position as a G3, he would stay on his previous wage level (which equated to around a new G5, a higher rate). Until his nominal G3 basic rate reached that level, he would not receive a pay rise. Moreover, his superannuation would be calculated at the grade he occupied, rather than on his actual pay. In addition, access to overtime and doubleheaders, which are the real earners on the wharf, could be restricted according to your grade and position. Thus, a G3 might have more access to overtime than a G4. If the man is young, the G3 is the more desirable grade as his
For us, it worked out good, but the wharfies haven’t benefited. If you’re stuck in a lower grade it’s hard to go up unless someone leaves. (Colin, Tradesperson).

This grading system stinks! I was a G4 before I came here. Then I learnt to drive a forklift and I became a G3! (Clem, General Hand).

I was getting more status before and more money, but I jumped up and down about a forklift and ended up going down a grade. (Dennis, Crane Driver).

The classifications have caused untold trouble because no-one expected that people with 20 years’ experience in driving forklifts would be graded at anything but G3. They were often put at G2! However, there were big pay rises attached. By the way, you can be upgraded from G2 to G3 on an employer-needs basis. What does that say about proper recognition for skills? (Jack, General Hand).

Other workers felt the career opportunities outlined in the EBAs were more credible in the abstract than in the reality.

The employer likes to think there’s a career path, but I don’t see it going anywhere. (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).

I don’t think we have a career path. We should do, though. We should be able to progress to senior management. (Craig, Supervisor).

There’s not much opportunity to do anything else from what I do now. They say the opportunity is there to progress but I find it pretty much impossible. (David, Crane Driver).

Ironically, David was considered by many of his colleagues as a super-wharfie: one of those new breed of multiskilled, enthusiastic and capable waterside workers who would rejuvenate the industry and help make Australian ports internationally competitive. His comments, however, indicate that this is a view which he doesn’t share and, indeed, one of his current income is higher and superannuation is not an issue. As the companies could recognise virtually whichever skills they chose in the grading process (that is to say, two equally skilled men could see one of them put in a G4 and the other in a G3 position, for example), many workers perceived it to be an unfair system.
dreams was to "make enough to get out and then go and do something interesting".

Some respondents indicated that, with the union "piss weak", as one man saw it, the conditions that they’d managed to retain after the reforms would gradually be eroded.

There is no way in the world we are going to be able to give it to the employer! We haven’t got the numbers any more. Anyway, people don’t seem to want to do anything but look after themselves. (George, General Hand).

There’s nothing to offer us. If anything, it’s made our positions weaker on the waterfront. Now they can actually kick you out! (Louie, Relief Crane Driver).

The union? Who are they? They don’t even have the right to come down here without the employer’s permission any more. (Dean, General Hand).

To some of the respondents, though, it didn’t matter that there was nothing on offer.

What do I care? I still get paid? I work to live, not live to work. (Glen, Relief Crane Driver).

For me? [Shrugs]. I don’t think anything. I’m an old man. I can’t change. (Niccolo, General Hand).

It’s just not that much different as far as my job goes. (Jim, Tradesperson).

It can thus be seen that where the survey group felt there was nothing to offer from the reform process, they were influenced by their perceptions about their financial and career opportunities, and the role of the union in improving their current and long-term positions.

Something to Offer
Most workers, though, considered the reforms did offer something of benefit to them, as well as to the industry’s future. The interaction between money, multiskilling, career progression and job security and satisfaction was complex, and is best illustrated by the comments from the
respondents. Notably, some workers gave more or less importance to each criterion of benefit, indicating that the value of each is reasonably idiosyncratic. Jerry and John appreciated the increased responsibility in the job.

I'm getting more money and a bit more responsibility. I've learnt more about the planning and loading of boats, which is good. (Jerry, Crane Driver).

It gives us responsibility for the stuff that we always knew we could do. Every time we found a job before, they found a foreman and a clerk! (John, Leading Hand).

Danny, below, felt that some opportunity for advancement was offered by the reforms; showing that it was not only possible to aspire to a higher position, but that such an ambition was now ideologically sanctioned.

It does give you the opportunity to progress whereas before it was just closed. You couldn't go to being a foreman without being a traitor before. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

Other men considered job security was associated with the new skills which they were now acquiring.

I've got more job security because multiskilling makes us more versatile and important for the employer. (Matthew, Crane Driver).

We've possibly got something. Our grades have dropped, but we've probably got more of a chance if any of the wharf does get closed up. We can get shifted and we've got skills we didn't have before. (Graham, Manifest Clerk).

Increased job security also arose from their increased work effort which worker's such as Paddy associated with "easier" dismissal clauses in the EBAs.  

162 The term, "idiosyncratic" is used here, as elsewhere, in its classic, rather than contemporary, sense. That is to say, it refers to unique and particular characteristics rather than eccentricity or unreasonableness.

163 Clause 8[e][v] of the Stevedoring Industry Award (1991), Summary Dismissal, provides that the employer "shall have the right to dismiss any employee without notice for misconduct that justifies instant dismissal, including malingering, inefficiency or neglect of duty".
You get more income and a permanent job. You look after your job more because within a year or so you will be able to be sacked. So you tend to look after your job now. (Paddy, General Hand).

The improved communication between management and men had been a positive outcome for Paul, below, and Michael found the incentive scheme and flexibility to provide twin benefits.

My job satisfaction is better and I'm more informed as to what is going on. I like to be informed before the rumours start. (Paul, Crane Driver).

It’s good to be a free enterprise person. You're doing different jobs all the time now. It's much more flexible. And the bonuses seem to make you enjoy your work a lot better. The incentive scheme is what creates all the work. (Michael, Crane Driver).

One of the major outcomes of the reforms for workers in A and B Sheds was the introduction of performance bonuses. D Shed had been working under an incentive scheme for the previous two years, but their's, too, was improved with the EBA. C Shed workers were the only group in the sample who did not have a bonus scheme in operation at the time of this study.

The calculation of the bonus is detailed in the EBAs, and differed between companies. Bill explained how the bonus system worked at B Shed:

The way it works here is that one gang has a certain number of containers or a certain ton of steel or scrap iron. The gang varies, it might be 8 men on containers or 9 men on men on scrap, say. These are the only jobs we get a bonus on. You do 40 containers, say, then any above that gets paid $20 per container split between the gang. We get a bonus when we're on paper [cargo] too, but we can't make it - it's too high. (Bill, General Hand).

Patrick indicated how the concept of a bonus has been accommodated by a worker who, on his own admission, had been "fighting the evils of capitalism" all his working life:

The machinery made the productivity possible, so we might as well get the incentive payment. You can still do a fair day's work anyway without losing conditions. Our
wages under the Accord had dropped down, so it was a way of making them up. (Patrick, General Hand).

Ted, too, had to come to grips with the concept; showing concern about the relationship between the workers' solidarity and the bonus scheme. It shouldn't be on every job because it creates divisions. It's getting back to the Bull system. But it's okay for money reasons - at least we've got something. (Ted, Crane Driver).164

At A Shed, the bonus was distributed across the workforce rather than to specific gangs, and this mitigated the inequities, according to Bob.

It's good because it covers everyone who works on the wharf in this company. You get it even when you're on holidays. (Bob, Crane Driver).

A number of workers saw the bonus as an incentive - in that they felt it improved their job satisfaction or effort.

It's good - a great way to work. (Steve, General Hand).

It's good - it gives you something to aim for, a bit of job satisfaction. (Paul, Crane Driver).

It's good - it's paid as a reward for doing the job. You wave a dollar bill under a wharfie's nose and he'll find a way to get it! (Craig, Leading Hand).

It's good - it gives you a chance to get some money and it makes you do the job quicker. (George, General Hand).

It's good but because blokes work faster they lose out on overtime. But we think it's good, though. Profit-sharing would be better. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

Some workers felt that the bonus didn't make enough of a contribution to their pay packets, either because the employer delayed payment or because the government took too much of it in taxation.

164 The Bull system refers to the casualised labour selection system where the strongest-looking men (Bulls) where chosen from among the crowds of potential labour on the docks.
It's no good. It's not paid when it's due and we've got to pay forty-eight and a quarter percent tax on it. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

It's no good. Mostly, you don't know you've got it because you don't get to keep it - it goes in tax. Particularly on a week when you've got a big pay. You never get it on a flat week when you do need it. (Jerry, Crane Driver).

A part is good but most of the money goes to the taxes. But is good. (Niccolo, General Hand).

It's good, but we work pretty hard here. Our tax should be related to productivity. If we do 30 to 40 containers we get $700 bonus and pay $701 in tax. (Keith, General Hand).

Generally, though, the men in the survey group liked the opportunity to earn more money which they were given by the bonus schemes.

It's good. You can make $200 in one shift on steel. You can't make anything on paper though. (Jim, General Hand).

It's money for jam. We don't do anything extra for it. The employer's complaining now - they set the number and now they want to change it from 18 containers per hour to 21 because we're making too much. (Archie, Relief Crane Driver).

I'm a bit more conscientious now. Before, not many people took pride in their work on the wharf. But now we've got something more to look forward to in our pocket each week, it's given us some incentive. (Graham, Manifest Clerk).

It should be on every job. You should get paid according to how much you work. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

Notwithstanding the benefits, though, the increased pay associated with the EBAs and bonus schemes often had its own price tag.

There's more money, but there's lots more stresses like divorce because we're working for it. (Tom, Leading Hand).

It's better pay, but we sold our arses down the road to get it. (Bill, Relief Crane Driver).
I've only got more money now. I haven't got the security and variety that I used to have because I'm stuck in one position. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).

We're earning more money, but there's no real guarantee about holding your job. They can still get rid of you tomorrow with this EBA. (Bill, General Hand).

Summary: Workers' Perceptions of what the Reforms have to Offer

Around a third of the sample felt the reforms really had nothing to offer them in terms of a career path and that they had been disadvantaged by the new grading system and the perceived lack of union power which had accompanied the EBAs. The majority of workers, though, did feel that there were benefits to be gained from the waterfront reforms and an idiosyncratic combination of job satisfaction, career opportunities, multiskilling and job security underwrote this perception.

That the reforms had often been accompanied by bonus schemes was generally perceived as a good thing, even though respondents had some reservations about the appropriate implementation of these arrangements. The money came at something of a cost though and respondents' comments indicated that there is some calculation taking place on an individual basis. The final evaluation of that analysis is the subject of the following, and final, section of this case study and considers the workers' judgement of the reforms.

The Workers' Judgement Of The Waterfront Reforms

The men from the survey group have thus far indicated that the waterfront reforms were a legitimate response to the need to make Fremantle a competitive port. The purpose of this section is to see how workers have weighed up the details of the process and outcomes of the reforms by addressing two questions. The first is a consideration of the macro level of change: whom has the reform process most benefited? Secondly, workers were asked to apply a judgement to their own, individual, experience of work: is work better now, and do they like it more?
The Beneficiaries of Reform

As indicated earlier in this chapter, the whole nation was expected to benefit from the waterfront reforms. Clients, in terms of cheaper transportation costs and reliable, efficient delivery; employers in terms of increased productivity attracting more contracts; the government in terms of increased exports of goods and services and, from that, the general population; and the workers in terms of increased job security, satisfaction and access to better wages and skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO ARE THE WINNERS IN WATERFRONT REFORM?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Employer</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Us and the Employer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 45 cases.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.23: Waterfront Workers' Identification of Parties who have most Benefited from the Reforms.

Table 6.23 shows that a majority of respondents considered employers were the principal beneficiaries.

The shipping companies benefit. That's where it stops. It doesn't go on to exporters. The shipping companies are the greedy ones. They were pirates once and they still are. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

I'd like to say the users benefited, but I can't. The shipping companies are the big winners. (Louie, Relief Crane Driver).

The ship owner's the winner. Our wages are a bit better, but we're working harder with half as many men. (Bill, General Hand).

The ship owners are in front by a mile because the price doesn't come down and they're getting four times as much done. (George, General Hand).
The companies are winning. They're getting twice the productivity with less wages. (Alan, Tradesperson).

While they acknowledged that the employers were the big winners, the need for change was also reiterated by some workers.

The employer is the big winner. We've given a lot away without any real advantages. But we did have to change. (Steve, General Hand).

The shipping companies are the winners. Before, though, they weren't getting what they paid for. Mind you, they weren't offering much either. (Robert, Manifest Clerk).

Other workers felt the benefits extended beyond the companies.

The men that retired, to a degree, have been the winners. But also us, to a degree, and at the top of the triangle, the employers. (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).

Some of the men have benefited - those who've gone up. But other guys have gone down. Management have got out of it quite good. It's more management's way. (Davy, Crane Driver).

Wharfies have benefited, 'cause they got a pay rise. They won't tell you they're better off, but they are. (Graham, Manifest Clerk).

It's the retired wharfies and the stevedoring companies who are the real winners. (Jim, Tradesperson).

The Perception that Work is Better (or Worse)
Clause 3 of the Stevedoring Industry Award (1991) states, inter alia, that the Award seeks to "provide stevedoring industry employees with access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs" in accordance with the Structural Efficiency Principle outlined in Chapter One. As Table 6.24 shows, workers in the sample group gave their jobs "thumbs up" on each of these categories.
Table 6.24: Waterfront Workers' Post-Reforms Opinion of their Jobs with Respect to Job Fulfilment, Payment and Variety.

The highest positive response was to payment - 86% of the men surveyed thought their job was now better paid. Sixty-two percent of respondents considered their job to contain more variety and a smaller majority (53%) found it more fulfilling. These categories were often integrated when workers considered whether they liked work more now. As Table 6.25 shows, the majority (51%) did like work more now; though 42%, evenly split, perceived it to be either the same or not as good. There was a complex interplay of many variables determining workers' responses and the aggregate summaries do not fully illuminate the picture. Being better paid, more fulfilling and having more variety in a job, for example, did not necessarily make work more enjoyable overall. It is necessary to consider workers' individual views in order to ascertain some of the meaningful dimensions underlying the perception that they liked work more, less, or the same as before the reforms.

Some workers who thought work on the wharf was pretty much the same as it had always been indicated a phlegmatic attitude to work.

[Laughs]. It's a job. (Steve, General Hand).

I don't like it more, but I don't dislike it, if you see what I mean. It's my job. (Clem, General Hand).

Workers who didn't like work as much now sometimes felt something was missing on an emotional level, be that camaraderie or mateship or the uncertainty associated with new roles.

I don't like coming here anymore. Everyone's all niggly and stressed out. (Don, Relief Crane Driver).
The work is better and you don't get so frustrated, but you don't ever see anybody at work now which makes us more divisive and lonely. I miss the comradeship. (John, Leading Hand).

I only have a lingering enthusiasm for my job now because of my impression of the employer. One day he sucks up, the next day he's almost a chain saw. (Greg, Relief Crane Driver).

You can't rely on your union as much. If you don't toe the line, you're out. You have to change your attitude because you haven't got the backup of the men. (Dennis, Crane Driver).

The colour and humour have almost gone out of the job. (Willie, General Hand).
The fun's gone out of it. (Craig, Supervisor).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO YOU LIKE WORK MORE NOW?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 43 cases. 43 100

Table 6.25: Waterfront Workers' Perceptions of Whether they Like Work more Now.

The majority of workers in the survey group did like work more now, though, and sometimes it was because the job was less structured or gave them more opportunity for a personal type of involvement.

I enjoy it more because I have to think for myself. Before, they presumed you were a slow learner\textsuperscript{165} without giving you a chance. (Dean, General Hand).

\textsuperscript{165} Although it has officially fallen into disuse, the term "slow learner" was an idomatic generic which was applied to the intellectually disabled. It gained widespread currency in Western Australia in the 1960s with the establishment of a parent-
You're starting to think more for yourself - using more initiative. (Paul, Crane Driver).

I like it better now. I was just going through the motions before. (Danny, Relief Crane Driver).

I like the responsibility. You were like a robot before. (Craig, Leading Hand).

It suits me to keep busy. So I like it. (Graham, Manifest Clerk).

Other workers had trouble expressing why they liked work more now, and their comments indicated the complexity of emotions that are invested in a job.

I can see myself getting somewhere now, money-wise. Or self-esteem or something. I can't explain it really. (Jim, General Hand).

I feel like I'm doing something that's worthwhile. Not, I wonder if I'll get picked up tomorrow or get a day off. (Lloyd, Leading Hand).

Some men attributed their enjoyment to the perception that effort was more evenly divided and the outcomes fairer.

sponsored care organisation known as The Slow Learning Children's Group. The term should thus be considered pejorative in modern usage, but is generally not wholly malicious. That Dean should have felt management thought him intellectually challenged is not unreasonable. One of the General Managers interviewed told me at the outset that I should understand that "a wharfie is not very intelligent. Not that he's stupid though. Do you know what I mean? It's just that the nature of the beast is that he'll say a lot of silly things. They just say the first thing that comes into their heads. It's the way their minds work".

Perhaps Jim welcomed the opportunity to shrug off his nickname. The wharf assigns nicknames fairly early in a worker's tenure - and they stick. As the majority of men spent their entire working life on the wharf they were attributed characteristics in youth, or because of single notorious events, which may have been less applicable with the passing of time. Jim's sobriquet was Rigger (rigor mortis) and he was quite cross when another worker "dobbed on him" by telling me that nickname. There is a certain black humour associated with many of the nicknames on the wharf and, indeed, some of them are hilarious; but I dare say the hilarity pales if you have to wear tags like Loada (load-of-crap), Whinger, Tear-Arse (arising from one episode with baked beans twenty years ago), Nipper (fine when you are the youngest in a gang) and the Galloping Gourmet (spare-time catering contractor) for years on end. One man, who had been married four times, complained that every time someone had cake for smoko - every single time - the blokes would say, "Another piece of Alan's wedding cake?" The humour was inspired, but relentless. So Jim, the lazy Rigger of some years ago was working to a different beat.
I enjoy it more now because everyone's getting in and doing it. (George, General Hand).

Our conditions are a lot more realistic now, and they weeded out a lot of the bad workers. (Bill, General Hand).

There's less lazing around. People are doing the job and you don't have to chase them. (Kelvin, Leading Hand).

Summary: The Workers' Judgement of the Waterfront Reforms
Work on the waterfront is better for a small majority of workers in the survey group. Those who felt work was now worse generally found it less "enjoyable" and the men who thought nothing much had changed seemed, from their comments, not to expect too much personal return from work other than their pay. Where workers felt work was better, they mentioned their greater satisfaction in what appeared to be an increased mental involvement in the job or in a perception of a fairer effort and reward distribution.

CONCLUSION

Fifty waterfront workers at North Quay in Fremantle, Western Australia, were surveyed by questionnaire and interview about their experiences of the waterfront reforms associated with the WIRA and EBAs of 1990-1992. It was seen that the reform process and outcomes were viewed in terms of their historical context and that this context played a large part in the survey group's reception of the reforms. The case study firstly examined workers' consent to and legitimation of the perceived role of management and the desirable role of workers in change; secondly analysed workers' perceptions of the imperatives, processes and outcomes of change; and finally considered workers' perceptions about whether the reforms had delivered the promised individual and national benefits, and whether the survey group actually liked work more now.
Legitimation and Consent

Waterfront workers consented to and legitimated management's right to control the organisational agenda in the following areas:
- determination of the broad organisational direction; and
- the leadership and authority functions workers perceived as necessary to reach the destination prescribed by that direction.

This legitimacy and consent could be mitigated by management being perceived as
- just interested in cost-cutting, as opposed to increasing overall productivity;
- trying to diminish the role and power of the union;
- not putting in enough or appropriate effort themselves.

Even when these perceptions of management were held, however, the waterfront survey group upheld the general legitimacy accorded to the reform process.

Extending the basic theoretical grid which was proposed in Chapter Three, Diagram 6.1 summarises the waterfront survey group's legitimation and consent behaviours and attitudes.

Workers did not legitimate or consent to management control if management sought to
- too closely interfere with the worker's discretion about how to achieve job-level organisational objectives. If any party had the right to tell the worker how the job should be performed, it was the union. However, workers were prepared to override union rules in order to uphold their own judgement of the best way to meet the efficiency imperatives of the reforms.
- question workers' effort ratios.
Granting Consent and Legitimation

- Acceptance of quality standards
- Commitment to organisational goals
- Perceiving a need for strong leadership
- Acceptance of a commonality of interest between workers and management
- Experiencing a sense of trust
- Striving for better performance
- Implementation of management's desired changes in most circumstances
- Desiring to remain with the organisation
- Belief that management rightly sets the organisational-level agenda and determines organisational objectives
- Adherence to the new ways of working even if they contravene union rules or traditional practices
- Acceptance of the new methods of conflict resolution.

Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation

- Expectation of within-job control while working towards management-defined objectives
- Manipulation of time to the workforce's advantage
- Consenting to new employment practices on the grounds that the union has entered into an agreement with management.

Withholding Consent and Granting Legitimation

- Support for other workers
- Acceptance of work problems as inevitable
- Acceptance of the new work methods, but not consenting to management's control of within-job effort.

Withholding Consent and Withholding Legitimation

- Self-determination of the effort level
- Individualisation of rules to best suit the worker's job and thus better tailor it to organisational objectives
- Desiring worker participation in change so that workforce expertise is available to management
- Refusal to implement unsafe work practices
- Refusal to implement changes that would not make a positive contribution to productivity or, if no productivity benefit, to better outcomes for the workforce.

Diagram 6.1: Waterfront Workers' Consent and Legitimation: Locating the Constructs on the Theoretical Grid.

There was a mixed response to individualism on the waterfront, with consent and legitimation withheld from management's attempts to individualise the workforce in a large minority of cases. Where
individualism was upheld, it was seen to be a complex blend of a desire to be recognised for their efforts which workers directed towards organisational objectives and a statement in favour of a worker's ability to make sound and appropriate decisions with respect to the way their job articulated with organisational and industry goals.

Workers considered that the person performing the job was best suited to tailoring that job to meet organisational requirements. Neither beliefs about according or withholding consent and legitimation appeared to interfere with the waterfront survey group's implementation of changes once they became an organisational "fact" (however unpalatable that fact may have been), though the degree of enthusiasm with which workers embraced the implementation was seen to be bordering on reluctance. The workers' consent to work beside casual labour was an indication of this attitude. If it was in the EBA, even if workers thought it was an undesirable work practice, it was deemed "fair and square". A great deal of legitimacy and consent was accorded to the work practices described in the EBAs and they were not seriously challenged, despite some grumbling. Similarly, the more consensual methods of conflict resolution inherent in the EBAs were widely legitimated and actively pursued.

The men in the waterfront survey, then, could be viewed as consenting to and legitimating management's direction of the broader organisational picture and leading workers some way to the attainment of management-defined objectives. However, these workers were not prepared to legitimate or consent to management incursion into worker-defined boundaries associated with their own job. Waterfront workers felt they were better placed than management to fit their job to the organisational objectives - a perception which underscored their interpretation of the process and outcomes of the waterfront reforms.

**Experiences of Change**

The waterfront workers surveyed perceived the reforms to arise from one principal agenda - an efficiency imperative. This imperative was perceived by workers to underwrite all the reforms - though the men
generally felt that management would squeeze everything they could from the present situation, which was largely seen to be in management's favour. The reform process was perceived to involve a complex interplay of forces; with such powerful actors as federal union and employer bodies and governments being responsible for the reform initiatives. There was virtually no disputation associated with the reforms, a phenomenon workers generally attributed to the inevitability and legitimacy of the reform imperative and the process of implementation.

This consent to and legitimacy of the reform imperative was further indicated in the workers' perception of their influence over the reform process. Although many of the men surveyed felt they had had an ineffective input into the bargaining process, they were prepared to concede their union the right to legitimately bargain on their behalf; consenting to the implementation of what they saw as the legitimate outcomes of due process.

Although a third of the sample group felt they personally had gained nothing from the reforms, the majority of workers surveyed indicated that an idiosyncratic combination of job satisfaction and security, and career and skill development opportunities were available from the changing work practices. The introduction of incentive schemes was also widely legitimated, though some men perceived problems in their implementation.

Workers generally believed that the employers were the major beneficiaries of the waterfront reforms. Yet this perception did not appear to dampen the survey group's legitimation of the changes. Similarly, although not all workers actually enjoyed work more now, the majority indicated that work was more varied, better paid and more fulfilling than had previously been the case. The following comment from Ted summed up the general perception about the quality of changes in the employment relationship on the wharf.

*There were a lot of hard set attitudes and hatred against management and foremen. Old times had to be brought into line. There's always been "them and us" on both sides but it's starting to change.* (Ted, Crane Driver).
In conclusion, workers' subjective and objective experiences of widespread organisational reform on the Fremantle waterfront, as indicated in the case study, have illustrated a variability of experience of the change process and outcomes. Legitimation and consent were both variable and capable of being withheld and workers identified "good" as well as "bad" outcomes from the reform process. These findings accord with the materialist approach to understanding the experience of the capitalist labour process, and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Nine.
CHAPTER SEVEN

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AT MINECO

THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE

The industrial minerals sector earns around $3 billion per annum at current prices, representing approximately 25% of Western Australia's total value of mineral and petroleum production (Dragicevich, 1994:14). It is thus a significant industry group in terms of earning capacity and employment opportunities, although less prominent than the iron ore and gold mining industries whose industrial relations practices are better known beyond Western Australia. Nonetheless, "industrial mineral projects provide stable and meaningful employment for the communities in which they are located and produce positive economic benefits, particularly in remote regions" (Dragicevich, 1994:15). This case study explores the changing nature of that employment at one minerals processing site in rural Western Australia as the company, called MineCo in the study, comes through a period of economic downturn.

Mining has contributed to Australia's economic performance for more than 150 years (Whiffin, 1993:1). However, approximately 80% of Australia's mineral production is exported, which makes the mining sector particularly vulnerable to world economic and national exchange rate fluctuations. Contributing less than 15% of total world production, Australia's status as a price-taker in the mining sector decreases the industry's control over these fluctuations (Industry Commission, 1990:10.1 - 10.2).

The mining industry has thus always been exposed to the global marketplace, but in the 1990s has faced particular challenges arising from:

- financial and trade deregulation;
- export-oriented production and competition in global markets;
- a customer focus emphasising quality, variety, and speed of delivery as well as cost-competitiveness; and
the use of benchmarking and best practices.
(After Whiffin, 1993:6).

The industrial minerals sector of the mining industry faces these challenges and more. In a sector which, globally, is estimated by the World Bank to provide 72% of mineral production volume and 40% of total output value (Wyatt, 1994:16), Western Australia is one of the top ten producers of processed industrial minerals (Dragicevich, 1994:15). In addition to those problems experienced by the mining industry as a whole, the minerals processing sector is constrained by the traditional commercial conduct of operations (Wyatt, 1994:16) and a highly competitive international sector, with similar products available from most producing countries (Dragicevich, 1994:15). The Western Australian sector's international competitiveness has suffered from:

- short-term contractural arrangements with customers;
- the role played by agents;
- higher transport costs for containers from Fremantle; and
- delays in obtaining quality accreditation.

The world-wide recessionary climate of the past five years has kept the price of minerals low in the international market (Cusworth, 1995:23-24; Department of Resources Development, 1994a:7) and, indeed, the three years from 1992-1994 have been described as "one of the more dismal periods in the industry's history", with both production and prices dropping in response to the economic recession (Spencer, 1994:2). Production value also suffers from the relative remoteness of deposits and the low price and medium demand for the commodities (Dragicevich, 1994:15) and the inability of producers to pass labour cost increases on to international customers (Whiffin, 1993:3). Although the sector is now experiencing some resurgence, with economic growth giving a favourable outlook for commodity prices (Cusworth, 1995:24; Department of Resources Development, 1994:26; Department of Resources, 1994a:7; Spencer, 1994:2), it was in the 'dismal' period that MineCo turned to labour management practices as a means of addressing cost and efficiency concerns.
Labour Management in the Mining Industry

The mining industry in Australia has long been associated with conflict and an adversarial approach to industrial relations (Industry Commission, 1990:17.1) with the terms and conditions of employment for workers being regulated by either Awards or Enterprise Agreements for at least 60 years (Whiffin, 1993:1). This trend is changing, and mining industry employers are looking towards innovative labour management to provide a source of competitive advantage (Whiffin, 1993:7). In its 1990 review of the industry, the Industry Commission found that

If our industries are to be world competitive, industrial relations practices need to be better managed at the enterprise level. Trust and commitment need to be better shared between employers and employees, and greater recognition of mutual interests will need to be an integral part of industrial relations. (Industry Commission, 1990:17.5).

It was argued in Chapter One that one of the main industrial relations strategies which was perceived to achieve greater international competitiveness through better labour management was an increasingly deregulated labour market. The principal employer group for the industrial minerals sector, the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA), approved of this strategy and advised members in 1991 that the individual employment relationship was increasingly important to achieving this end. (Whiffin, 1991:1). At the state level, the Western Australian Government which was elected in 1993 was prescribing through new legislation, an environment wherein employers should seek to develop "flexible, mature and innovative working conditions that are directly relevant to individual employers and employees" (Kierath, 1995:53, emphasis added). Furthermore, the AMMA did not "advocate the consultation or involvement of unions in planning and developing workplace reforms - unless specifically requested to do so by the employees affected" (AMMA, 1993).

The legislative and political climate was thus ripe for an employer such as MineCo to offer individual contracts to its workforce, and the economic climate made it easier for the workforce to accept.
Together Success At Mineco

MineCo, the state division of a multinational company, is one of the major players in the industrial minerals sector in Western Australia (Wyatt, 1994:16), its presence in the sector dating from the early 1970s (Australian Titanium Minerals Industry, 1992:11). In response to a depressed market and rising production costs, MineCo underwent a considerable organisational restructure in 1993. The restructure had three industrial relations aspects:

• The reduction of the existing workforce via voluntary redundancies;
• The offer of individual contracts of employment to Award employees to give them "staff" status;
• The reorganisation of work to finalise multiskilling and a team approach to the production process.

The restructure was a corporate management initiative emanating from the Sydney office and was designed in part by a team of communications consultants who were retained by the parent company to develop a reform strategy which would persuade the workforce of the necessity, not only for change, but for a particular type of change which would lead to specific outcomes. MineCo management hoped that the most significant outcome from what will be called here the Together Success strategy would be in the improved productivity arising from teamwork, co-operation, and employee involvement. By demonstrating a commitment to teamwork, and establishing a single-status workforce, [MineCo] will increase awareness that by working together, all employees can contribute and share in [MineCo's] success. (MineCo, 1993:5).167

Traditionally, MineCo workers had experienced the type of employment conditions associated with the minerals processing industry. Conditions of employment had been negotiated at industry level between respondent unions and employer organisations, and disputes arbitrated by the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC). In

167 The document cited in this instance is one of a number of original company documents which have been embargoed in order to preserve the confidentiality of the study. They are held by the researcher and are available should they need to be viewed. I have coined the term, Together Success, because it encapsulates the objectives and philosophy of the reform process without identifying the organisation.
deciding to move to individual contracts, the management were faced with a number of possible strategies, and the one they chose is instructive. MineCo had always conducted its industrial relations within the state system. The Mineral Sands Award was registered with the WAIRC and site-specific Agreements complementary to that Award had been consistently updated within the same system. Given the changing legislative climate in Western Australia and MineCo's traditional association with state rather than federal industrial relations, coupled with management's desire to individualise the employment relationship, it was surprising that the company did not seek to establish a Workplace Agreement under the new Western Australian industrial legislation.

Management's decision not to follow the State Government's suggested path was driven by the desire to not be associated in the workforce mind with confrontational employment strategies, according to its Divisional Human Resources Manager. The decision might also have been prompted by a desire to avoid union interference. The MineCo site which is the subject of this study had traditionally had little union activity, with low levels of disputation and a very low on-site union profile. Entering into a Workplace Agreement could, arguably, have inflamed union interest more than the offer of individual contracts which had a history in the Western Australian gold mining industry which was also covered by the principal union involved at MineCo, the Australian Workers' Union (AWU). In addition to its desire to avoid trouble, MineCo also wished to avoid notoriety in this highly competitive sector. Firmly believing that they would gain a competitive advantage through the Together Success strategy, the Executive Director for Corporate Services indicated, in interview, that MineCo wanted to keep a "very low profile".168

MineCo workers were offered a common law individual employment contract whose total conditions were in excess of those obtainable under the existing Mineral Sands Award - the offer being summarised in the

168 MineCo was not making change for change's sake. Total Success had a predicted net financial advantage to the company of about $2.2 million (MineCo, 1993:26). According to the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, "any changes that do not improve productivity or revenue or reduce costs are basically worthless" (Hamilton, 1995:150) and MineCo undertook this strategy firm in the belief that such benefits would accrue.
company publication which has been reproduced as Diagram 7.1. Accompanying the benefits which the company believed would accrue to workers were a number of obligations which iterated the objectives which the company hoped to achieve from the reform process (Diagram 7.2). Along with the company's Employee Relations Philosophy Statement (Diagram 7.3), these communications which were directed at the workforce constituted a considerable assault upon workers' identification with and commitment to the organisation.

As these summaries suggest, the Together Success initiatives included a teamwork focus and a productivity bonus. The Performance Related Remuneration (PRR) scheme averaged production across the site and provided a bonus of around 7.5% to all workers based on monthly production averages. Part of the attractiveness of the individual employment contract to employees was the company's decision to provide a 12.5% PRR on the first month's salary if the offer was signed forthwith. The PRR would be complemented by a profit-share scheme to be paid six-monthly in line with MineCo's company reports and, at the time of the interviews, workers had great hopes of a considerable bonus arising from what they perceived should be increased profits.169

169 The Divisional Human Resources Manager indicated, in interview, that workers would be disappointed on this score, as profits had been less than anticipated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SALARY</th>
<th>AWARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Method of Payment</td>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance Record</td>
<td>Timesheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Review</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Determination</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Performance Assessment</td>
<td>Hay system, individual and company performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Related Remuneration</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superannuation</td>
<td>Up to 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit bonus</td>
<td>Defined benefit based on total earnings. Improved death, total and permanent disability benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual leave loading</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Service Leave</td>
<td>Included in salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick leave</td>
<td>Pro-rata entitlement after 7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliances</td>
<td>As necessary. No accrual required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>All-inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours per week</td>
<td>4 weeks' notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure days/RDOs</td>
<td>Nominal 40 hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overtime</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>Included in salary. Paid for the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Based on trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>&quot;Whole&quot; employee, based on organisational needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Agreed grievance procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers' Compensation</td>
<td>Prime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current salary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 7.1: MineCo Management's Summary of Changed Workforce Entitlements Arising from the Individual Employment Contracts associated with the Together Success Initiatives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>OBLIGATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary.</td>
<td>Work as necessary to complete job. Additional skills development and training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No demarcation.</td>
<td>Skills used wherever necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved superannuation benefits.</td>
<td>Individual superannuation contribution increases to 5%. An individual non-contributory section will be available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in how work is done and organised.</td>
<td>Greater accountability and commitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More flexible and more rewarding work environment.</td>
<td>Assist in redefining work arrangements/sharing expertise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less direct supervision responsibility.</td>
<td>Onus on team responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for personal assessment, training, development and career advancement.</td>
<td>The goals of the individual and the company are aligned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Related Remuneration (A share in the site's performance).</td>
<td>Co-operative work environment resulting in improved productivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual performance acknowledged.</td>
<td>Work smarter and remove barriers which increase costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved communication.</td>
<td>Distribute site performance results. Believe your input is important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-going review.</td>
<td>Constructive feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being part of a strong and profitable organisation. Determining your own job security.</td>
<td>A stronger company commitment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 7.2: MineCo Management's Statement of the Benefits and Obligations arising from their Offer to "Award" Employees to become "Staff" Employees.
MINECO EMPLOYEE RELATIONS' PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

WE BELIEVE THAT MINECO'S PERFORMANCE WILL BE MAXIMISED IF ALL EMPLOYEES' GOALS ARE MORE CLEARLY ALIGNED WITH THOSE OF THE COMPANY.

THEREFORE, WE WISH TO FOSTER A WORK ENVIRONMENT BASED ON:

• RECOGNITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES
• INTEGRATED WORK ROLES
• WORK FLEXIBILITY
• TEAMWORK WITH SPECIALISED ROLES WHERE APPROPRIATE
• REWARDS LINKED TO INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION AND OPERATING UNIT PERFORMANCE
• STANDARDISED EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS
• OPEN AND DIRECT TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION
• SAFETY, SECURITY AND HEALTH OF EMPLOYEES

Diagram 7.3: Mineco Management's Employee Relations' Philosophy Statement which accompanied the Together Success Initiatives.

MineCo's team structures were determined at site level, with Team Leaders being elected by the workforce in the first instance and rotating throughout the team at six-weekly intervals thereafter. The workforce's experiences of these teams and their attitudes to and experiences of the reforms form the subject of this case study, which begins with a consideration of workers' consent to and legitimation of management's role in directing the reforms and the labour process generally. Secondly, the study will consider the particular experiences which Total Success has engendered at the MineCo site.
Overview Of The Research Process

A student on work experience at the AMMA first alerted this researcher to the organisational restructure which was occurring at MineCo's minerals processing site in Western Australia. The Divisional Human Resources Manager was contacted, and gave his permission to proceed with the research project, subject to the approval of the Executive Director (Corporate Services) in Sydney, and the divisional and site managers in Western Australia. Permission was quickly obtained from all senior managers, all of whom seemed interested in the research and proud to "show off" what they regarded as an extremely successful reform strategy. The Site Manager was a little less confident of the value accruing to the intrusion into his production time from the research project and asked for two conditions to be met prior to access being granted.

The first condition was that a list of interview questions be submitted for consideration by the site management team. This was made available and negotiation proceeded over the wording of some of the questions. The final outcome was that all references to "workers" and "boss" were to be excised from the questionnaire and replaced with "employees" or "staff" and "team leaders". The researcher duly complied. The second condition was that a comprehensive report be presented by the researcher to the site management team at the conclusion of the project. This was not an unreasonable request, given the amount of production time which would be lost during the interviews. Incorrectly handled, though, it could compromise confidentiality. Management were thus advised that any report would have to comply with the University's guidelines on ethical research practices. It was finally agreed that a brief, aggregate summary of information which the researcher considered would be helpful to management but which would not endanger the anonymity of respondents would be supplied at the end of the project. A presentation would not be made, and the researcher would not be available to answer questions from management.
The site Human Resources Manager was deputised as the liaison point for the organisation of the research, and team leaders were contacted to arrange suitable times for interviews with staff who chose to become involved. A letter similar to that in Appendix One was sent to the site and placed on noticeboards in the crib and training rooms to alert workers to the nature of the research process and the researcher’s independence. All workers who were subsequently approached elected to participate in the study.

Because of the site’s distance from Perth, the interviews had to be conducted during one week’s visit to the region. A preliminary visit was made during the preceding week to comply with Occupational Health and Safety requirements (prolonged site visits have to be preceded by a safety induction procedure and "kitting out") and attend the weekly Production Meeting with some team leaders and workers to explain the study. Interview times were organised via fax from Perth and proceeded as planned when the project commenced. All interviews were conducted in quiet and private surroundings - utilising the training room, the production meeting room, or an empty office in the administration building, according to vacancy. Each interview lasted, on average, between three quarters and one hour. No interruptions were permitted during the interviews, which began with questions from the Background Questionnaire and concluded with the subjects’ individually completing the Theoretical Questionnaire.

The Mineco Sample

Thirty-seven MineCo workers were surveyed, comprising approximately 58% of the MineCo operational and production maintenance staff at the company’s minerals processing site in rural Western Australia. The survey group was exclusively male, which is only slightly gender non-representative, there being two female staff in the population.170

170 A decision was made not to include the two women in this survey, on the grounds that their experience of work would be necessarily influenced by their gender, the researcher not wishing to confound what was a predominantly male perspective on the effects of organisational change (though the issue of masculinity and how that affects workers’ perceptions is, regrettably, not pursued in this study).
As shown in Table 7.1, 65% of the sample group were operators who either monitor and adjust processing equipment or provide a site support function, depending on their operational area. Approximately a third of the sample were tradespeople, who perform maintenance on the production equipment at the site, and a rubber worker (the processing tanks and pipe connections are all lined with rubber) and storeperson completed the sample group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION LEVEL</th>
<th>Number of Workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operator</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesperson</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber Worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storeperson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 37 cases.</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1: MineCo Workers by Position.

Table 7.2 indicates that the MineCo sample is a relatively "youthful" one, with 65% of respondents having between two and four years' tenure with the company, and only 8% with more than 10 years' service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LENGTH OF SERVICE</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-4 years</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 37 cases.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2: MineCo Workers by Length of Service.

The MineCo sample can therefore be described as an exclusively male survey group representing 58% of the MineCo production services non-managerial staff. Operators (24) and tradespeople (11) dominated the
sample, but the views of a rubber worker and storeperson are also represented. The survey group's length of service with MineCo is relatively short, with approximately two-thirds having between two and fours years' tenure.

Worker Consent To And Legitimation Of Change

This section examines whether and how workers consent to and legitimise management control in general and management prerogative in the change process in particular. It seeks information not only about direct forms of control but also on the bureaucratic, organisational-level control structures and worker beliefs about where the right to control labour effort resides. The discussion will begin with a consideration of how workers grant legitimation and consent to the change process and management's role in general; and will go on to consider the attitudinal and behavioural variations of according and withholding consent and legitimation.

Granting Consent and Legitimation
The following section examines whether and how workers consent to and legitimise management control.

Table 7.3 (over) indicates that almost all workers surveyed believed that management had the right to initiate change if such change was predicated on a quality imperative. In this case, MineCo workers were aware of the depressed market their industry was facing and, to the extent that Together Success was perceived by workers to be addressing this issue in a way which minimised the adverse organisational impact and enhanced the marketplace position, that initiative was accorded legitimacy and consented to by the survey group.

Going in New Directions
Question One indicates that an overwhelming 95% of the sample group granted management this legitimacy and consent, Rob's comment reflecting the benefits which 90% of respondents (q.6) felt could accrue from the types of changes inherent in the Together Success initiatives.
We had to get better work practices to be more competitive. There was no flexibility before, too many demarcations. (Rob, Storeperson).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1. Quality Imperative = Change Ok</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Mgt/wkrs are working to same goals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. I'm here to do job, not decide how to do it</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. Mgt can trust me to do my best</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5. Management do good job</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6. Benefit in Change?</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11. Commitment to Org Goals</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12. Mgt/wkrs are working to similar goals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13. I strive for better performance</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14. Need Bureaucratic Procedures</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16. Mgt/wkrs are a team here</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17. Mgt should determine fair day's work</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18. Strong Leadership Necessary</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3: Granting Consent and Legitimation: MineCo Workers. (n=37).

Question 11 assesses the respondents' commitment to the organisational goals and around 90% of the survey group indicated such a commitment. It was often the case that MineCo workers perceived that the
organisation's goals were to secure the company's future in the marketplace and, as Tom noted, this was sometimes seen to be part of a genuine commitment made by senior management to the organisation as a whole.

We're market-orientated now. The company as a whole is a good company because they did their very best to maintain the workers and even when they had to let people go, they didn't just sack them, they got redundancies. (Tom, Operator and Team Leader).

Tom was reflecting the view that management had, on the whole, done a decent job of things in its response to a difficult economic outlook but, when asked whether management generally did a good job (q.5), MineCo workers were more critical about the way management had responded in terms of the Together Success initiatives in particular. Fifty-one percent of the survey group felt that management had really made some changes in their own attitudes and behaviour, in line with the Together Success strategies.

Management are more consultative than they used to be. This is difficult for them, but they're trying. (Chris, Tradesperson).

Management are willing to give more responsibility to people. Like they'll say, "This is our job - you can do that", especially with the computer. The computer used to be their job and we weren't allowed on it but now if you say you can do something, they say, "do it!" (John, Tradesperson).

A third of the sample, though, disagreed with the proposition, and Mick's comment is representative of this minority view.

Management only appear to pay lip service to the Together Success philosophy. They're not used to being questioned - yet we're allowed to question them now. The workforce has grabbed it and run with it and they're surprised. (Mick, Tradesperson).

Are management and workers, then, going in the same direction? Questions 2 and 12 assess workers' perceptions that management and workers are working towards the same goals. According to 60% of the survey group, there was a shared goal orientation, yet only 35% felt that
management and workers were a team (q.16). It could be that MineCo workers considered that management and workers generally had the same goals in view, but were working towards them separately rather than together. Carl's perspective indicates how, in their own ways, management and workers were striving for goals which the workers legitimated - but with different emphases and quite different roles.

Management are very cost-orientated. That means engineers, for example, can't problem-solve on plant problems because they're always doing their budgets. (Carl, Rubber Worker).

Question Four assessed whether workers felt management could trust them to do their best, and all 37 workers agreed that this was indeed the case at MineCo. John's comment shows how this trust was appreciated by workers, and Ian, Alan and Mick indicate why it was justified.

There's no daily timesheets any more, just weekly ones, and we don't have to put in a leave form for a day or time-in-lieu. And there's no more scrutiny on sick leave, so there's a lot more trust in that respect, which is good. (John, Tradesperson).

When you see something's broken now, you don't just walk past it. (Ian, Operator).

I'm more thorough now - I put more of an emphasis on getting things right and doing the Quality Control. (Alan, Tradesperson).

I think more now about how I should do the job. And I think about whether I should do this or that so often. (Mick, Tradesperson).

This belief that they can be trusted was supported by the survey group's response to question 13, where 81% of respondents stated that they strive for better performance, many of the MineCo workers favourably comparing their current work effort to that prior to Together Success.

I feel more positive about the work now. I feel more inclined to keep the place going and do my best because in the long run you know it's going to benefit you. (Charlie, Operator).
I'm more prepared to put in a bit of effort to make things run smoothly. The PRR helps too. But the industry was sliding and we couldn't really afford to be slacking off. (Garry, Tradesperson and Team Leader).

I'm doing the job more efficiently, for sure. We need to survive in the business. (Ward, Operator).

Given that the sample group generally legitimated and consented to the direction management set in the Together Success initiative, it was interesting to note the range of opinion on the need for bureaucratic procedures (q.14), (with a fairly even split about their necessity) and strong leadership (q.18 - 73% desiring it) as facilitating the attainment of that direction. Bureaucratic procedures are the visible hand of invisible leadership and, at the workshop and process level, were evident in standard operating procedures and the time allocations which formed the costing basis for job sheets. Where workers legitimated and consented to operating guidelines, they considered it a function of management to ensure workers were enabled to reach the objectives inherent in them. This may require appropriate guidance and direction from management and, if it was not forthcoming, may cause a worker concern.

There's not enough supervision done on apprentices and even with us, it's all done on trust, and there's no double-checking. (Harry, Tradesperson).

Harry's observation suggests that he had legitimated the organisational goals and consented to the need for management to guide the workforce to the achievement of those objectives. Earl's comment, below, supports this and further indicates his legitimation of the individualisation of the employment relationship via the Together Success policy. His concern was that, now individuals were rewarded for their efforts, it was important for management to ensure there was a system whereby individuals could be appropriately rewarded.

There's not enough people looking at you. Some people don't do the work, but they manage to be high profile. So there's no real way of determining where the effort is. (Earl, Operator).

Mick thought management had an important role to play in guiding and supporting workers towards achieving the best outcomes for the
organisation. The notion of employee empowerment was an integral part of the Together Success strategy but, as Mick observed, it was up to management to effectively empower workers. It was necessary for workers to be given the skills and the authority to be empowered, and these were not forthcoming.\textsuperscript{171}

\begin{quote}
People who are supposed to be empowered to make decisions don't because they don't have the technical ability or the authority. So they just make "safe" decisions. (Mick, Tradesperson).
\end{quote}

Approximately a quarter of respondents did not legitimate and consent to the need for strong leadership and 41% felt bureaucratic procedures were unnecessary. This position is illustrated by Tim's dilemma - the combination of the directive function of the supervisor and the procedural guidelines laid down by the metallurgist complicated his ability to do his job.

\begin{quote}
You're caught between the devil and the deep blue sea at this place. The shift boss calls you off to do something and then the metallurgist goes crook because you've missed a reading. You just don't need the shift boss. If I want to know something I can always ask another operator or someone else who knows as much as the shift boss. (Tim, Operator).
\end{quote}

Matt, though, perceived the need for effective leadership - reiterating the legitimate role of management in directing the big picture.

\begin{quote}
Management have put more onus and responsibility on the tradesman. This is a downfall because we need a leader to kind of put it all together. (Matt, Tradesperson).
\end{quote}

Indeed, if management didn't provide that leadership, or tried to evade their decision-making responsibilities, they attracted criticism from the workforce.

\begin{quote}
Management are quite a good mob of guys. They'll call you by your first name. But there're still a few problems
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{171} The possibility of workers ever being effectively empowered in the capitalist labour process is arguable. My own view is that it is impossible, given that power resides in the ownership of the means of production. However, HRM definitions of empowerment may differ with my understanding of the term. I will abstain from the debate in this instance.
with 'em. We might want something done, but sometimes they don't give a damn and they'll pass the buck to the next guy. (Steve, Operator).

Management are not willing to take responsibility. There's a lot of buck-passing goes on around here. (Rob, Storeperson).

In summary, the MineCo respondents legitimated and consented to the objectives inherent in Together Success and, to the extent that management leadership and control facilitated the attainment of efficiency objectives, workers supported management efforts and were critical of management deficiencies in taking responsibility and structuring appropriate reward systems for individual effort.

Limits to Legitimation and Consent
Sixty-five percent of the survey group did not think that management and workers were a team (q.16). This contrasted with their earlier belief that workers and management were going in the same direction, but question 16 may have been tapping the workers' reaction to one of the key features of Together Success - that management and workers are no longer differentiated as "wages" and "staff" personnel. That the "them and us" attitudes which were felt by senior corporate management to be part of the old operating culture had not been eradicated under Together Success was apparent to the MineCo survey group, and Tom and Austin indicate some of the basis of that opinion.

It's still them and us. You're still classified as white-collar workers (giving the orders) and blue collar workers (doing the work). (Tom, Operator and Team Leader).

It's them and us. They don't get dirty or anything. We get dirty. (Austin, Operator).

These attitudes translated into what many workers perceived as a lack of management commitment to the "staff" focus in Together Success.

Management still want to do things the old way. They're not approachable in a serious way. (Eddie, Operator).

There's been a reluctance of many management people to let go of decisions. They really do hold on to the decisions and you don't have the right to criticise them at
this place. To be honest, I'm a bit disappointed. I was pretty hopeful earlier on. (Jack, Operator).

As a result, respondents were not prepared to legitimate or consent to any stated position from management that MineCo was a model of equality. George's observation was echoed time and again in interviews with the MineCo survey group.

Them and us will always be them and us. The latest is the shift bosses and above are professional staff and we're non-professional staff! (George, Operator).

Larry, below, sums up the workforce perception about what is obtainable from Together Success, despite the rhetoric and the philosophy.

We're not staff; we're wages with some staff privileges. An AWU operator can't be on staff. The same structure still exists, despite what you may have heard from management. (Larry, Operator).

Eighty-three percent of MineCo respondents felt that it was their place, not management's, to determine a fair day's work (q.17) and did not legitimate or consent to management's intrusion into what workers viewed as their own legitimate sphere of control. It was up to workers to determine the appropriate amount of effort required to allow their job to make a positive contribution to meeting organisational objectives. For many workers, this was a reflection of the change that they had recently made in their attitude to work. Vince and Charlie, below, explained the role the new salary structure has played in the way they determined their effort output:

I'm using my initiative more now. It's a loyalty thing really. A decent wage leads to a decent day's work. (Vince, Operator).

I feel more positive about the work now. I feel more inclined to keep the place going and do my best because in the long run you know it's going to benefit you in the PRR. (Charlie, Operator).

For other workers, the response reflected a deeply held sense of control over what they deemed to be appropriate effort. Tim indicates that he has always put in the effort to give value for money on his labour, but
appreciates the greater opportunity of fulfilling this personal objective which is available under Together Success, while Austin's approach has not been affected by the new working arrangements.

I've always reckoned that if a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well. And it's more possible to be a perfectionist now. (Tim, Operator).

I haven't changed my attitude. I'm employed by them, so I'll still give them 100%. This Together Success doesn't change anything that way. (Austin, Operator).

Although there was a majority (63%) view that management should not intrude into how the work was done (q.3), around a third of MineCo respondents felt that they were there to do the work, not decide how to do it. This may partially reflect the type of work which is carried on at MineCo. Harry indicated how control over the job was constrained by the production operation.

We don't have much control over our jobs really here. The plant determines what needs to be done. For example, if we have to do any maintenance, we have to get it done when the plant is down. You're fitting yourself in around down-times and even if you've got your own priorities over what's needing to be done, if something blows on the plant that's what you fix. (Harry, Tradesperson).

Nonetheless, although the nature of the production process did set operating limits on workers' job control, within those constraints workers often felt they had a legitimate role to play in determining the best way to meet organisational objectives via their job.

I've got some control over what I do because although I've got to do the readings, I can organise myself in between them so that everything that needs to be done can be done in the shift. (Ian, Operator).

There are guidelines, but you have to put your own priority on the jobs which are most necessary because you're the one who's familiar with the plant. (Bruce, Operator).

Noel, Greg and Marty preferred to get on with their job without what they saw as unnecessary interference from management.
Weekends are good because there's no management snooping around and interfering with you. (Noel, Operator)\textsuperscript{172}.

It's a good day if the bosses stop away. That way, you can just get on and do the job like it's supposed to be done. (Greg, Operator).

I like to be left alone to do your job. Sometimes I get the feeling that you're a robot and not a human. They employ you to do the job - they don't do it. So they either should do it themselves or let you do it. You're the one who's supposed to know what to do aren't you? I mean, that's what I reckon anyway. (Marty, Operator).

George believed that Together Success had encouraged what he, too, saw as a more appropriate devolution of responsibility for making within-job decisions.

It's good now. It gives you that extra bit of independence which you need now. In my case, I get a list of jobs and you have to work out how to do it best by fitting it into your lap. It's just so much more efficient than being called around all over the place by the shift boss. (George, Operator).

Thus, the majority of MineCo respondents have indicated that it is they, and not management, who are better placed to make decisions about work effort and how the job is to be performed. They felt they were better suited than management to make these decisions because of their expertise in the job.

Summary: Granting Consent and Legitimation
MineCo workers in the survey group indicated substantial legitimation and consent to the Together Success employment initiatives in terms of making the operations more viable in the marketplace and consistently

\textsuperscript{172} One of the control room operators showed me a graphics program which had been developed by one of the men. It showed the main gates to the mine site with an approaching car bearing the name of the Site Manager. As he neared the gates, a spaceship appeared and beamed up the car before disappearing into space. The operator indicated that most men accepted the S.M.'s interference during the week, but couldn't abide his habit of popping in over the weekend as they felt he was trying to catch them out. As it happened, the operator was correct in his assumption, as the Site Manager told me in interview that he liked to come in unannounced on the weekend to see if he could "catch any of the lazy so-and-sos sitting around".
upheld the changes as beneficial to the organisation's fortunes. To this end, they were prepared to legitimate and consent to management's role in directing the workforce to the achievement of that goal via their leadership and bureaucratic procedures. Management and workers were seen to be working towards the same goals, but with different emphases and roles to play in the process of meeting those goals. Management's role was in coordinating the big picture but, at the specific job level, the majority of the survey group withheld their legitimation and consent from management incursions into the determination of effort and specific job performance; basing this reaction on the workers' superior knowledge of the specific requirements to enable jobs to articulate with these legitimate organisational objectives.

Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation

This section examines whether workers consent to control without legitimating management's right to control a particular aspect of the labour process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.4: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation: MineCo Workers. (n=37).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q8. Possible to cover wkr's skipping off.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9. Expectation of control over job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10. I'm able to determine best way to do my job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15. Best for me, not mgt to decide how to do my job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19. Bureaucracy stifles initiative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4 indicates that the workers in the MineCo survey had an overwhelming expectation of job control (q.9, 94%) which was based on their expertise in the job (q.10, 97%) - making the job incumbent, rather than management, the best person to tailor the job to what workers
perceived as legitimate organisational requirements (q.15, 87%). This supports the trend apparent in the previous section, and extends here to the ability to manipulate time and tasks in order to provide coverage for other workers if they need to be absent (q.8, 86%). Although 28% of the sample felt that bureaucratic procedures at the mine stifled intitiative (q.19), 69% did not, again supporting the earlier view that there was room for worker control within the guidelines of the standard operating procedures, as Wally indicates.

They do give you a four hour sheet and you've got to write on it why the job wasn't done in that time, but you've still got a lot of control really. I just do what I have to do to do the job. It's up to them if they've got a problem with that. They don't hassle me though. Mind you, they wouldn't want to, either. Who's the tradesman? you might ask. (Wally, Tradesperson).

Keith felt that the new quality standards (ISO's) actually increased the amount of within-job judgement which an operator had to exercise in order to meet them.

There's a lot more emphasis on the operator to work things out now with the ISO. It's good, because you're thinking "well, what's the best way of doing this so it does what it's supposed to do?" (Keith, Operator).

Respondents felt they were much better qualified to fit the job to organisational requirements than management, consenting to such management control as had to be endured while not legitimating management's control within the confines of the job. Bruce's comments show how management, this time in the form of a supervisor, can be perceived to obstruct the worker's ability to meet organisational objectives.

Sometimes you get a supervisor who doesn't know the job. Which is okay by itself, but if he doesn't know the job, he's got to listen to the people who've got the experience, and that doesn't always happen. And, of course, that means that everything takes ten times as long and ends up useless half the time anyway. (Bruce, Operator).

Earl had a similar problem. He is notionally in control of monitoring the entire production process via the electronic measuring sensors which
feed data into a bank of computer screens in the control room. The system itself has automatic shut-offs which he can override with permission, but his main role is to alert operators to potential problems based on readings falling out of the normal range. If adjustments are made before the danger range is reached, the plant will not need to be shut down. The control room operators all said they had a "feel" for the plant and the idiosyncrasies of sensoring equipment which they had gained over time in the job, and one of their greatest bugbears was the single downstairs control screen which could be accessed by metallurgists and supervisors. Earl explains.

I'm always having run-ins with the boss. I get sick of people looking at the control screen downstairs telling me to change things when I know what to do and can assess the situation correctly. (Earl, Operator).

Under the Together Success initiatives, workers were supposed to have more responsibility for within-job control as Ron explained.

They want you to show a bit of initiative now - they don't want to order you around all the time. Say if you've got a blocked pump or something, they want you to figure out how to get it going again. (Ron, Operator).

Where supervision did not adequately reflect this new emphasis, workers did not legitimate what they judged as out-dated and inappropriate management techniques.

It would all be basically okay if they would just let us have the changes that we were promised we could have - like increased control of our own destiny on a shift level. Shift bosses (or should I say "team leaders") need to be educated to lead, not be boss. (Jack, Operator).

Look at what happens with the store. We're supposed to be in charge of what we do, right? And they're supposed to trust us to get this place off the ground again. Right again? Then why do we have to go through all the bosses just to get some small things out of the store? You explain that to me. You can't, because it's stupid. Either they want us to do the job, or they want to do it. This way, no-one's doing it because I'm running around all over the place to get a piece of paper signed by a million people. (Barry, Operator).
Summary: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation

The majority of MineCo respondents consented to managerial control in determining the broader organisational requirements through their acceptance of management's bureaucratic control structures as expressed in standard operating procedures and quality standards. Respondents, however, overwhelmingly expected control over their own job - basing this desire on their perception of superior expertise in the job. This control extended to the ability to manipulate time to their and other workers' advantage. Thus, the survey group did not legitimize a managerial incursion into within-job control. Workers felt they, and not management, had the expertise and superior judgement to fit their job to organisational requirements and, basically, should be left to get on and do just that without interference.

Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent

These questions examine how workers generally legitimize management's right to control the labour process, but don't consent to all particularities. Table 7.5 indicates how workers might act to withhold their consent and in what areas such lack of consent might be experienced. It can be seen that a majority of MineCo respondents (59%) were prepared to say that they would support each other if such support was perceived to be necessary (q.29), but if the existing functions of their group were threatened it was by no means certain that MineCo workers would take action to preserve the status quo (q.27), nor would most people be prepared to work to rule to express their displeasure (q.25). The support which could be anticipated, then, was likely to be of a non-collective kind. Around a third of the survey group said they were prepared to bend work rules (q.22) in order to work more quickly. Question 26 seeks to examine how many workers felt they were doing what was required, but experienced frustration and were only waiting for another job to come up so they could leave. The majority (68%) did not feel this way at MineCo.

Indicating their dissatisfaction about work, but without questioning the legitimacy of the control structures which made them unavoidable, seventy-nine percent of the sample felt that problems at work were inevitable (q.20), and seventy percent said that they never knew what management would spring on them next (q.36). Notwithstanding this,
though, the MineCo workers in the survey group were generally conscientious towards their work responsibilities - the majority (57%) considering sickies to be available only for genuine illness, not just because "work gets too much sometimes" (q.21); a similar majority (51%) perceiving MineCo as a reasonable place to work, not desiring similar employment elsewhere (q.35).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree %</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>No opinion %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q20. Work problems are inevitable.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21. Sickies not just for illness.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q22. I'll bend rules to work more quickly.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q25. I will work to rule if I'm disgruntled.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26. Do everything I'm told but fed up and would leave if possible.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27. We'd act to preserve our group's functions.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q29. Workers support each other.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q35. Like similar job in another organisation.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q36. Never know what mgt will do next.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.5: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent: MineCo Workers. (n=37).

These responses suggest that MineCo workers were prepared to grant management a fairly wide scope of control which would be consented to and considered legitimate. Their withholding of consent could be viewed as being related again to the issue of job control: workers were prepared to
legitimate management's role as coordinator and director of the organisation's activities, but did not consent to an arbitrary imposition of management's wishes upon the workforce. The workplace was not viewed as fundamentally harmonious yet the legitimacy of its control structures was not seriously challenged. Thus, MineCo respondents indicated their legitimation of Together Success but withheld their consent where management intruded into areas which workers perceived more rightly belonged to the workers' purview.

In legitimating Together Success, the survey group were accepting the responsibility for determining an appropriate work effort and many respondents did not consent to management's intrusion into that determination. Don's comment, below, indicates how the need to be an effective worker is complicated by what he perceives as unreasonable management behaviour and Matt shows how social interaction can interfere with work effort.

Our workload gets too big because they haven't realistically looked at what we can do. And this is made worse because sometimes you aren't able to do things without permission and sometimes people you go to have also got a big workload so they just fob you off. Management should do something about that. (Don, Operator).

Sometimes you're not in a mood to break records and other days you go like a bull at a gate. If someone makes a nasty comment you can get upset and you're more likely not to break any records that day. (Matt, Tradesperson).

Larry and Mick felt that adequate support for implementing changes had not been forthcoming; their comments indicate that they legitimated the spirit of the changes but did not consent to management's ability to make everything happen - the workforce had to be adequately provided with whatever is necessary for appropriate implementation.

Lumbering us with more work was purely from a personal hatred, like from their bias. So that needs changing. And they have a lack of knowledge of what we do, so you get the situation where the facilities for us to deliver weren't provided. If you took our job as a single-
storey house, they added another storey without doing anything to the foundations and it's toppling. (Larry, Operator).

The trouble is that the onus is on the tradesman to make a lot of changes in regard to capital justification and that, which is okay as far as it goes. But because we've had no experience, the changes don't eventuate. But we can get up some good ideas. The tradesmen came up with the idea of the rotation. Management weren't so keen at first, but we've handled it well and it's all going ahead. (Mick, Tradesperson).

Mick's observation of the rostering initiative which emanated from the workshop tradespeople against management's wishes was a classic example of legitimating the philosophical direction in Together Success and not allowing management to hijack that philosophy of self-determination in work practices. In some ways, the response to the creation of teams has been similar. The team structure is generally legitimated in principle but respondents were often critical of particular aspects of their operation which, again, interfered with the attainment of organisational objectives, in the workers' opinions.

I thought the teams were a reasonable idea, but my attitude has definitely changed - for the worse. They made small teams and then the team goes and puts up a demarcation barrier. The team says "that's your job, you do that and don't do Joe's job". (Harry, Tradesperson).

I thought the teams would be a good idea. Yes, you could say I viewed them favourably at first. But as it turns out, management still make all the decisions. For example, I didn't want to come onto this shift - sorry, "team", but they're not teams really cause we break them up all the time. Anyway, I could have said no, but I'd have a black mark against my name if I did. So I don't think they're proper teams because management are running them and you can't even choose which one you want to be on. (Frank, Operator).

I thought very highly of Together Success when it started, but now they're putting too much workload on us. They should've kept the spares. If they'd asked us how many we thought should be in the team, we would have counted for spares. But now we're running and there is
Steve's experience was a common lament at MineCo - wanting to provide a good service, workers were unwilling to continue with the effort in the face of continual barriers. Carl offered another perspective on the problem. Rubber workers are always the last people to work on a breakdown or maintenance job and their desire to get in, do the job and get away from it is complicated by both the structural barriers in the organisation and the attitudes of other workers.

The main problems here are poor planning, poor communication, ignorance and people's selfishness. We're always the last blokes on a job and people don't care about who's behind them, so they might work slowly and it's 7pm before we can finish our bit of the job. We're told to work as a team, but there's too many individuals here. (Carl, Rubber Worker).

Carl's disillusionment is echoed in the attitude many respondents exhibited towards the procedures governing the implementation of workforce-initiated changes. The Process Change Procedures, as they are called, were accorded considerable legitimacy as an avenue whereby worker expertise might be incorporated into the operating procedures of the plant. However, the process is lengthy and not always successful, as Bruce indicates.

If an operator thinks of a better way of performing a procedure, he can take the idea to the shift boss. The shift boss then can take it to [the production coordinators] who can then take it to the metallurgists for comment. If the mets think it's a good idea, it's put onto a Process Change Sheet and goes onto the pin-up board. Every shift boss has to sign it to show that they are aware of the change and then it's passed on to the operators. This could take months and it can be stopped at any stage if someone doesn't like the idea or the person who put it up. Lots of people won't bother with it because they think nothing much will change, though that varies from shift to shift. (Bruce, Operator).

As Bruce noted, some effort is required from management in pushing the changes through and this reliance on other people complicates the implementation of what the operator in the first instance thought was a
helpful suggestion to improve production output or quality. Noel, Eddie and Paul have all had their fingers burnt with their experience of the process and are reluctant to try again.

I do things in the best way I can and I keep it to myself if I do it different. You can’t tell anyone cause you’ll get a kick in the arse. (Noel, Operator).

It depends on how much rigamarole there is in getting your message through. I’ve often harped and harped and then given up. There’s not enough support for people. You can be knocked off shift for voicing your opinion. (Eddie, Operator).

If you keep going with an idea that your boss doesn’t like, you’ll be going over his head and he’ll get pissed off and then you’ll get personal conflict coming in. And personal conflict can affect your performance evaluation. So you start to think, ”I won’t do anything like that anymore because he just wants to do it his way all the time”. (Paul, Operator).

Summary: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent
MineCo respondents generally legitimated the changed work processes and structures associated with Together Success, as was demonstrated in their conscientious attitude to work effort and absences, but withheld their consent from management control if certain strategies were not seen as conducive to greater organisational effectiveness. One significant way in which this withholding of consent was demonstrated was that respondents would not continue putting effort into managerial initiatives if the effectiveness of their efforts was constantly thwarted. The teams, for example, were generally legitimated as a good idea at first, but they were subject to problems of resourcing and favouritism, and consent for the effort involved in making them work on a practical level was no longer forthcoming. Likewise, developing innovative solutions to production problems was legitimated as a sound objective, but the practicalities of seeing the innovations brought to fruition was too arduous and workers would not consent to the extra effort (especially if management was not seen to be making a complementary effort).
Withholding Consent and Legitimation

These questions examine the boundary that exists beyond which workers will not tolerate any incursion of management control, neither consenting to nor legitimising management interference in what workers perceive to be their sphere of control over their own labour process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q7.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23.</td>
<td>I'll avoid new ways if they make work harder.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24.</td>
<td>More worker participation in change is needed here.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28.</td>
<td>I avoid doing things if there's no good reason.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30.</td>
<td>Mgt need to recall that I'm an individual. General rules won't always apply.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q31.</td>
<td>I try to interpret rules in the best way for my job.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q33.</td>
<td>I know what a fair day's work is and I should determine it.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q34.</td>
<td>If the rules go against them, I'll stick to the ways I know.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.6: Withholding Consent and Legitimation: MineCo Workers. (n=37).

As shown in Table 7.6, the majority (64%) of MineCo respondents see themselves as individuals to whom general rules may not always apply and think management should take that notion on board (q.30). This finds expression in the desire of seventy percent of the survey group to
interpret rules in a manner which is most appropriate to their own job requirements (q.31), and to yet another expression of the perceived right of workers to determine a fair day's work (q.33) - again an overwhelming majority view. This is supported by ninety-two percent of respondents perceiving that more worker participation in change is necessary at MineCo (q.24). It seems that the MineCo respondents believe that they not only know what's best at the job level, they also know what's fairest.

Knowing What's Fairest
Favouritism, particularly with respect to promotion and access to training opportunities, was a big issue for MineCo workers, and one which consistently undermined the legitimation and consent they were prepared to grant management in its exercise of control over these functions. Mick's view, below, is representative of many respondents' attitudes about training.

"It's to management's credit that they want a smarter workforce and I'm prepared to acknowledge them for that. But the problem is that there's been no follow-up to any of the changes - no training for them. We've all filled in our IDPs [Individual Development Plans] though, so we have asked for what we think we need. (Mick, Tradesperson).

This generally positive attitude towards training, though, was mitigated by the way access to training was perceived to be handled at MineCo.

"You need the training to be able to do the job as well as possible, but there's only a certain select group who get training. I put my forms in 12 months ago and I still haven't got any. (Carl, Rubberworker).

"There used to be a push for training, then it declined and plateaued out half way through. A lot of people get knocked back on training and other people get it when it's not needed. It really depends on how much you're liked. (Alan, Tradesperson).

"Training is only for people over there [administration] and for people up the ladder. Even though we've put in our IDPs, we're not getting it. Training is not even or fair. (Tom, Operator and Team Leader)."
Meritorious access to promotion suffered from a similar workforce skepticism - the concept of promotions being fair and reflective of effort neither consented to nor legitimated.

The shift boss wanted to put one of his mates up a level into my place. Well, I kicked up a stink about it and got shifted to another shift, but he put his mate in alright. There's lots of jobs for the boys like that, so what's the point of trying hard? I worked really hard to get into the control room and he just wanted to take me out and put in a mate. And if I hadn't really pushed it, he would've gotten away with it. Well, I s'pose he did get away with it, but you know what I mean. I would've got the chop. (Earl, Operator).

I want to get up in the levels and I've been trying pretty hard because this is a good paying job for a town job and I'd like to keep it and have a career here, so long as I don't have to brown-nose. Promotions around here are "chummy, chummy, I'll give it to you, old chap" so I don't know how I'll get on. (Marty, Operator).

Frank was even more glum, echoing Earl's belief that you might not only be shifted sideways, you might be shifted right out.

It is a well-known fact of life here that if you walk in tomorrow and upset the wrong person, you have a limited life span. (Frank, Operator).

By permitting obvious breaches of fairness in their dealings, management has not contributed to a widespread workforce legitimation and consent to promotional and training opportunities.

Knowing What's Best
That workers felt they should participate more in changes which they, after all, had to implement, echoed the theme of people who perceived that they were better placed than management to make a lot of employment-related decisions. Sometimes, underlying the perception that workers know what is best at the job level, is a lack of legitimation and consent to the authority and knowledge of particular managerial personnel, as in Larry's case, below.
The people feeding work through to us have no reality on our jobs. There are people in middle management now saying "perform, perform" who come from a time when there were plenty of men. These are the members of the "Blue Smoke Circle". (Larry, Operator).173

There may also be a perception that management themselves do not legitimate or consent to particular changes; rendering in the worker an acknowledgement of the power that accompanies a position and which can override any philosophical statements made in human resources policies. Tom described his situation.

My duties will only change as much as [my boss] wants it to change. If he doesn't want me to do part of his job, I won't get it. And what do you think I'll be able to do about that? Stuff all, that's what. It doesn't matter that he should be sharing more stuff with me. (Tom, Operator and Team Leader).

Usually, though, there was just a general sense that management did not take account of workers' experiences in determining the work process or manning levels.

It's good to be busy, but we've got no spares they've got it running so tight. So it puts the workload on you if someone pulls a sickie or there's someone off on holidays. (Greg, Operator).

All the cost-cutting has put an extra load on us and people short-change their jobs because of it. They should really have a look at that. They want it to be better but the cost-cutting just makes it worse in the end. (Noel, Operator).

In summary, the respondents did not legitimate or consent to management's control over work effort. Again respondents indicated an expertise based on having on-the-job knowledge which they believed would assist management in meeting organisational objectives. MineCo respondents also did not legitimate nor consent to management's role as

173 Larry's comment about the Blue Smoke Circle refers to a group of senior and middle managers of long standing in the organisation, who are known to socialise together. Their power is perceived to be great and they were mentioned by almost all respondents in their interviews. Blue smoke is the smoke from marijuana - a popular but illegal substance.
a neutral provider of training and promotion opportunities, seeing them as associated with widespread favouritism.

**Extent of Compliance**

However, when management has made decisions which affect the performance of their jobs, it appears that the MineCo respondents generally uphold management's right to have the decisions implemented. Returning to Table 7.6, it seems that even if new procedures go against the way they have been taught to perform their duties (q.34), the majority of MineCo respondents are prepared to concede to management's right to have them implemented. Even if they don't really want to (q.7), and feel they haven't participated in determining them, MineCo workers are prepared to implement the changes that management has intitiated.

Nonetheless, the implementation of the changes that management require was not completely upheld. A majority of MineCo respondents did not grant their legitimation or consent to the implementation of changes which made work harder (q.23). Similarly, a large minority (45%) would avoid working harder if they could see not good reason for expending the extra effort (q.28). Sometimes, this reflected a worker's attitude to change per se, as in Frank's case, below.

*I'm not doing anything different. It takes a lot to change me, I can tell you!* (Frank, Operator).

Generally, though, this response seemed to relate to a workforce perception of difference between working harder and working smarter - illustrating the need for research to take account of specific workplace meanings. At MineCo, the Together Success philosophy has encompassed the notion that work should not be harder - it should be smarter.

*There's more work done now with the same amount of effort. We're working smarter.* (John, Tradesperson).

*We're not working harder, but we are working more effectively. We're sharing the jobs around more, for one thing.* (Ian, Operator).
You don’t actually need to work harder to get better results - you just need to work smarter. (Mick, Tradesperson).

The MineCo respondents like Steve, below, deplored management decisions about personnel levels that resulted in insufficient labour to do the job without working harder.

There needs to be more effective input into manning levels from the workforce - we’re working our guts out sometimes when we’re really short staffed. And we’re meant to be working “smarter”, not harder. (Steve, Operator).

The need to work harder may also not be legitimated or consented to if the increased effort isn’t seen to provide reasonable outcomes for either the firm or the individual worker.

If I think I’m not coping with everything that’s put on me, I can’t work effective as I should. But if you’re coping, you do more work, for sure. (Don, Operator).

I s’pose the main thing that stops me putting my all into the job is apathy. Why would I bother? No-one else is going to bother. (George, Operator).

What I think stinks about this job is the fact that I’m working three times harder than some other guys, who may be getting more credit than me. (Bruce, Operator).

In terms of compliance, then, MineCo respondents indicated that they would implement management’s desired changes - even if they could see no good reason for them or went against the ways they had traditionally worked. They would not, however, legitimate or consent to changes which made work harder, and would seek to avoid the extra work in that circumstance.

Summary: Withholding Consent and Legitimation
MineCo respondents withheld their consent and legitimation from management strategies which were inconsistent with what workers saw as workplace realities or which did not discourage favouritism and cronyism in access to equal opportunities and rewards. Workers also denied management’s expertise in all areas of production - upholding the workers’ rights and abilities to make better job and effort-related decisions.
more appropriate to reaching organisational objectives. Respondents in the survey group, though, were generally prepared to consent to and legitimate management's right to have managerial decisions implemented, except where such policies made work harder. It was proposed that this caveat may have been a response to the expectation that Together Success should result in working smarter, not harder.

WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES OF THE TOGETHER SUCCESS STRATEGY AT MINECO

Almost all MineCo workers legitimated management’s right to initiate organisational change in the interest of promoting a more effective operational style which would result in keeping the company viable. Yet MineCo workers did not always perceive themselves as working in concert with management; though it has been shown that it appeared to be management's arbitrariness and favouritism rather than any lack of belief in the appropriateness of the Together Success strategy which caused workers to withdraw the legitimation and consent which was generally accorded to Together Success. As Earl noted, "The system isn't bad, it just needs to be carried out more".

There existed among workers a widely-held desire to control aspects of the labour process, which would be likely to mitigate management’s control in certain areas - particularly with respect to within-job expertise and work effort. As was seen in Table 7.6, though, workers generally believed that they would implement the changes management desired, provided those changes were consistent with the stated objectives of Together Success. It is to an indication of how workers understood the imperatives which Together Success sought to address that consideration now turns.

Workers' Perceptions Of The Change Imperative

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, Together Success was a top-level management initiative which was developed by the corporate
HRM team and subsequently "sold" to site management and the workforce. Site management did not, therefore, have much influence over the method of communicating the change; nor of its form - this being designed by a communications consulting firm. Employees were notified in three ways: They were approached individually by a letter offering an individual employment contract; site meetings were organised by local HRM officers; and through a company newsletter specifically designed to communicate the industrial reforms to the workforce which was mailed to the workers' homes. Workers could therefore be considered fully informed as to the nature and purpose of the Together Success initiatives as management saw them, and, indeed, their perceptions generally accorded with management's stated imperatives as the following section indicates.

Although four workers stated that they did not know why the changes had occurred, as indicated in Table 7.8, the majority of MineCo respondents believed Together Success was prompted by efficiency concerns - though Tim's comment reflects the multi-faceted nature of the problems which workers and management perceived were facing the company.

*I think they wanted to be more efficient, but they also wanted to cut costs. But they wanted to be pleasing the customer too, which is why we've got the ISO now.* (Tim, Operator).

Chris, who was on the Together Success Committee, which was established immediately after the change-over to individual contracts, explains that management had to respond to the marketplace exigencies.

*We had to change to maintain our market share. It was consumer-directed. We have to listen to our consumers now, not dictate to them.* (Chris, Tradesperson).

174 Called "The MineCo Review" during its phase as a means of communicating reforms, the company newsletter resurfaced as "MineCo Team-Talk" after the Together Success program had been implemented. The reason given, in the last issue, for the demise of the MineCo Review was that it had served its original purpose of explaining the "particularly difficult trading environment" facing the company - which had prompted the reforms.
WHY WERE THESE CHANGES MADE? | Number of workers | % of sample
--- | --- | ---
Efficiency and Cost Cutting | 19 | 51
Efficiency | 4 | 11
Cut Costs | 4 | 11
Don't know | 4 | 11
Other | 6 | 16
Sample = 37 cases. | 37 | 100

Table 7.8: MineCo Workers' Perceptions of the Imperatives for Change.

Mick, too expounded the majority view - that the changes were both necessary and appropriate.

_It was definitely to become more competitive. We had this old culture - people would come in and just sit around on weekends for the overtime pay._ (Mick, Tradesperson).

Table 7.8 also shows that workers were aware that management desired to decrease operating costs as a result of Together Success, and many respondents approved of this motive as one which would increase the long-term viability of the organisation.

_I think Together Success was brought in firstly for cost-cutting, but primarily we're a lot more organised and more professional and that means we need less people. So they shouldn't have to carry people they don't need. That's not doing any of us any favours._ (Garth, Tradesperson).

_The markets have been down and the economy has been bad so they want less people and less costs for the operation as a whole. You can't hold that against 'em._ (Ron, Operator).

Not all workers saw the benefits in this strategy, though. Eddie and Larry didn't buy the corporate line on Together Success providing more efficient work practices.
The whole idea of this Together Success was to put more onus on the operator. End of story. (Eddie, Operator).

They were biased in what they thought about efficiency. The concept of efficiency to people just above the shift boss was saying, "we'll give those bloody operators more work". (Larry, Operator).

Some workers in the survey group saw Together Success arising from a management desire that workers become more involved in their work. Andrew explained:

The idea with Together Success was to get people more involved and to make them think their work was beneficial to the plant. To make them feel that they were not just robots being told what to do. (Andrew, Tradesperson).

This conception of themselves as robots was to be alleviated by the devolution of decision-making which was supposed to accompany the Together Success initiative, as Vince observed.

It was the way of the future - to get the employees more involved, get them to take more responsibilities. It's not just here, I believe this sort of thing is going on everywhere and we had to change to keep up. (Vince, Operator).

According to Alan, it was not only at the job level that management sought employee involvement.

It was my understanding that they wanted more employee involvement as to the company's direction. Where we think the company should be going, that sort of thing. (Alan, Tradesperson).

The imperative behind this managerial desire for employee involvement was clear to John,

They needed to make the whole operation a lot more efficient - not just the people. To do that, they had to know a lot about the place. Anyway, that's why I think they want us more involved. We know what goes on with the plant. (John, Tradesperson and Team Leader).
Summary: The Change Imperatives
Although MineCo respondents identified three principal imperatives for Together Success (efficiency, cost and involvement concerns) they were all closely related, although workers did distinguish between efficiency and cost-cutting. The majority of the survey group upheld management's desire to be a more cost-efficient organisation and greater employee involvement was seen by some workers as an adjunct to that objective. The process by which MineCo management went about making changes in pursuit of these goals is the next subject for consideration.

The Process Of Change

Workers' satisfaction with the process of change was examined by inquiring into
• who workers perceived to be responsible for the changes;
• why the changes were not accompanied by disputation;
• whether workers found the changes disruptive; and
• whether workers were able to influence the changes.

The Responsibility for Change
Seventy percent of respondents identified management as responsible for the changes arising from Together Success (Table 7.9) and Harry's and Frank's are representative of the two main viewpoints masked by this aggregate figure.

It was top management who pushed the Together Success thing. They basically said to us, "you change, or we'll change it for you". (Harry, Tradesperson).

It was management's idea and it was for them to make money and so we can make money. The world had to change. (Frank, Operator).
In the "other" category, two workers claimed the government, and one each identified the Together Success Committee and employees as the change agents. Another worker excluded site management from responsibility and a further respondent felt there had been no change. Chris explained how the implementation of change quickly became a broad responsibility.

*The Together Success Committee certainly has played a big role in the changes. But the changes came off the shop floor as well as structurally through. You can't have one without the other.* (Chris, Tradesperson).

Alan and John also held similar views:

*As I see it, management steers and we grab on to it and say, "how about we do it this way?" That keeps it going - keeps up the momentum, I guess you could say.* (Alan, Tradesperson).

*Ultimately, wherever it starts, it ends up that everyone is responsible. The bottom line is that if people don't want to change, you don't change.* (John, Tradesperson).

The feeling seemed apparent that, though management was accorded the primary responsibility for initiating Together Success, it was only with workforce cooperation that the changes would be *successfully* implemented.

**The Lack of Disputation in Reform**

The extent of this cooperation was evident in the lack of disputation associated with the change process at MineCo. Even though workers
were moving from the Award system to individual contracts, they accepted the company's offer with 65% of the survey group believing it afforded good opportunities for the workforce (Table 7.10).

The following comments illustrate views commonly held among the MineCo respondents - the union presence was weak, the offer was good, and there was no alternative seemingly available:

*A fair offer was made - especially for shiftworkers. And there's never been any union action here anyway.* (Garth, Tradesperson).

*There was no point in staying with the old pay structure and, anyway, the unions here are pathetic.* (Matt, Tradesperson).

*There weren't any disputes but there was a big push from the union to be involved. But the union lost a lot of members because of the way things were handled by them. Anyway, it was a good opportunity for workers. The idea was to work smarter, not harder or longer, and we could all go for that.* (Laurie, Tradesperson).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE LACK OF DISPUTATION ASSOCIATED WITH THE REFORM PROCESS?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good opportunity for workers</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes inevitable and had no choice</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes inevitable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People welcomed change</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 37 cases.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.10: MineCo Workers' Explanations of Lack of Disputation Associated with the Change Process.

On-site shop stewards organised a mass meeting for workers to discuss the company's offer and the AMWSU (the Metalworkers' Union), which covered the tradespeople, sent a representative along to advise
members. The Australian Workers' Union (AWU), the union with the most extensive coverage at MineCo, though, was not represented at the mass meeting and a number of workers commented bitterly on this absence.

The union didn't even show. They let the blokes down, so it was all inevitable and we couldn't do anything. (Charlie, Operator).

The union let us down so we went with the company. We'll try the new system, but it can't be any worse than before. We had to go into it blind, though, without the union. (Tom, Operator and Team Leader).

Management was pressing for a unanimous acceptance of the Together Success package as essential to effecting large gains in productivity and, therefore, industry viability, and workers sometimes experienced pressure from their peers to accept the company's offer.

There was a fair bit of pressure from the other blokes to take the offer, so you didn't have much choice really. (Patrick, Tradesperson).

It appears, then, that the lack of disputation associated with the radical change in the employment relationship at MineCo was primarily due to the perceived generosity of the offer, aided by the traditionally weak union presence and peer group pressure to persuade the reluctant.

The Change Process and Worker and Job Disruption
It is hardly surprising that the majority of MineCo respondents should report their apprehension of the changes proposed by Together Success (Table 7.11, over), given that they were largely unsupported by their unions' assessment of the offer.

175 The shop steward for the Metalworkers' advised me that the union's position was that the workers might as well take the offer as it was better than anything the union was likely to get them at this time. This view was probably influenced by the union's weak presence and traditional lack of involvement at that site.

176 The AWU has a history in Western Australia of permitting individual contracts in mining operations.

177 According to the Site Manager, only one person did not accept the company's offer, and he continued his employment under Award conditions.
WERE YOU APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE CHANGES? | Number of workers | % of sample
--- | --- | ---
Yes | 23 | 64
No | 13 | 36
Sample = 36 cases. | 36 | 100

Table 7.11: MineCo Workers’ Apprehensiveness prior to the Changes.

Allied to this apprehensiveness was also a sense of skepticism - many workers held John’s view that Together Success might be just another change strategy which would not deliver the promised benefits. As the package received its legitimacy from its perceived ability to improve the firm’s competitiveness, it was important to workers that it achieve this objective.

It sounded all very wonderful and it seemed as though, if it worked, it would help put us back on our feet as far as the industry was concerned. But let’s just say that I was a bit skeptical. (John, Tradesperson and Team Leader).

Others were like Marty, not so much apprehensive as unclear about management’s agenda.

I wasn’t apprehensive exactly, but I felt I wanted to know what the whole picture was. They gave us plenty of information and it all seemed clear and reasonable, but I had this nagging sort of doubt that I was missing something, but I didn’t know what. (Marty, Operator).

As Table 7.12 indicates most respondents had overcome their apprehensiveness by the time this study was conducted.

Yet, although John was less skeptical, there was a measure of residual uncertainty as Earl and Eddie’s comments show.

I’m a bit skeptical still, but not as much. Actually, a lot of the things they said would happen have happened. They said we’d get bonuses through the PRR and we have, and they said we’d have more decision-making and the
rotation system we've got going shows that they're coming good on that, too. Mind you, we had to fight 'em for it. Still, we won in the end, so I suppose you'd have to say it was going okay. (John, Tradesperson and Team Leader).

There have been some improvements, but I still think some of the powers can be abused and the buddy system that's rife here is a good example of that. (Earl, Operator).

I'm still a bit worried about some things like superannuation and occ. health and safety and I know a lot of the other blokes are, too. Time will tell how those sort of things pan out under this new system. (Eddie, Operator).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARE YOU STILL APPREHENSIVE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 24 cases.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.12: MineCo Workers' Remaining Sense of Apprehensiveness.

Given the radical change in the employment relationship occasioned by Together Success and its individual contracts, it is surprising that more MineCo respondents weren't apprehensive prior to its implementation. However, such apprehension which was experienced did not appear related to the fact of the individual contract as not one worker mentioned it as an issue. Rather, workers seemed to be either skeptical of the promised outcomes actually being achieved or uncertain whether they'd grasped the full implications of the changes. Post-implementation and a few months' working under Together Success had alleviated over half the group's apprehensions, but residual uncertainty remained with respect to working conditions, occupational health and safety and benefits such as superannuation and merit-based opportunities.

Although apprehensive at times, the overwhelming majority of MineCo respondents did not find the changes disruptive, either personally or to the performance of their jobs (Table 7.13).
Where workers did find the changes personally disruptive, it was because work had intruded too far into their home life. This seemed to be a qualitative difference from prior to Together Success. Previously, workers had deliberately attempted to obtain weekend work to increase their wages and, although this practice cut into their social life, it was seen as a means of earning extra dollars without too much personal involvement apart from their physical presence at the site. Since Together Success, though, the personal intrusion was different - either because of the stress associated with the changes, the added weight of responsibility, or just the tenor of the new employment relationship.

Together Success is a funny title for my experience. These changes actually broke up a relationship because I was constantly worried about my job and talking about it all the time. So for me it's been not so much Together. It's more been "Me Alone". (Mick, Tradesperson).

It is disruptive. Once upon a time, it was just a job and you could go home and forget about it. But now I feel so responsible that I ring up from home if I've gone home and forgotten to do something. I don't like that feeling - I can tell you. I just used to knock off before. So in that respect, it's been disruptive, certainly. (Charlie, Operator).
Prior to Together Success, training would be done at work so they didn’t have to pay you extra. But now, it’s you that has to come in on your days off. You belong to the company now - that was made clear on the contract. (Frank, Operator).

The type of disruption which the survey group reported at the job level related to the increased workload, as Noel illustrates, and also indicated the lack of training in effective teamwork, as Matt shows.

*All this Together Success has been a pain in the butt for my job. We’re undermanned and I’ve got an increased workload. And for what?* (Noel, Operator).

*It’s been a bit disruptive because now you’re allowed to have a say, you find yourself talking around in circles.* (Matt, Tradesperson).

Generally, the respondents did not find the changes associated with Together Success disruptive to either their job or personal life. Where such disruption was experienced it was because the job intruded too much into the worker’s private existence, or because the changes increased the workload or upset the focus of the job.

**Influencing Change**

The majority (61%) of MineCo respondents did not feel they were able to have input into the Together Success changes, or that such input they were offered did not constitute effective input (Table 7.14).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO YOU FEEL YOU WERE ABLE TO HAVE ANY INPUT INTO THOSE CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7.14:** MineCo Workers’ Perceptions of their Input into Change.
There was a lot of consultation prior to the implementation of Together Success, but Andrew put that consultation in perspective:

We could organise appointments with management and we could argue about the offer with them, either in a group or alone. So we had input at that stage. But nothing happened from it. (Andrew, Tradesperson).

Laurie represents the view that there was even less input available than Andrew was prepared to concede.

We don't get input into things around here. Management tells us, "this is what we are going to do". Anyone who tells you otherwise is having a lend of you. (Laurie, Tradesperson).

Eddie, though, although admitting there was no input, didn't see that as a problem and Tom indicated why Together Success was so easy for management to sell to the workforce.

We didn't have any input - they sold it to us. But we were in a no-lose situation, I feel. (Eddie, Operator).

The input we got was, "if you sign up before next pay, you'll get twelve-and-a-half percent PRR in your next pay packet." You usually get seven-and-a-half percent! So that was our input. (Tom, Operator and Team Leader).

Marty wanted to be involved but felt that an alternative viewpoint was not genuinely sought on the Together Success Committee.

I went on to the Together Success Committee thinking they did want to listen, but they didn't so I pulled out. (Marty, Operator).

Thirty-six percent of the survey group considered they were able to have input into Together Success and their responses show how they recognised the scope of that input.

We couldn't have any input into the major proposed changes in Together Success. That was management's province very much. But in the implementation, like deciding how to run our own teams, we are empowered to do that. (Chris, Tradesperson).
Well, we discussed how we wanted to run our own departments, so that's having input, I guess. (Garry, Tradesperson).

For the majority of MineCo respondents, the Together Success strategy was seen to provide, if any, only limited scope for employee involvement in the course of the change process.

Summary: The Process of Change
Together Success was viewed by the MineCo respondents as a management-initiated change into which they were able to have little effective input. The changes were faced with some apprehension, but generally caused little disruption either at the personal or job level. Such disruption as was experienced appeared to be due to the intrusion of the job into the worker's personal life. In conclusion, it could be supposed that the offer accompanying the Together Success package was perceived to provide enough sweeteners to enable the relatively smooth progress of its implementation.

The Outcomes Of Change
The majority of MineCo workers reported earlier that they didn't want a similar job in another organisation, so it is reasonable to assume that it was a matter of concern to them that they maintain their tenure at MineCo. That there had been some redundancies associated with the Together Success strategy makes this desire particularly poignant. A concurrent concern was whether the changes would make their job, or work experience generally, better or worse. This section discusses both perceptions of job security and respondents' evaluations of whether they find work better now and like it more.

Job Security
One of the aspects of Together Success was the offer of a voluntary redundancy package to those workers who wished to leave the company. At the MineCo site, 14 workers took up the offer and exited the workforce. Given that MineCo workers had moved from the

178 Management's target for the MineCo redundancies was 20 workers exiting so, as far as management are concerned, there are six workers surplus to requirements. This is not known beyond the management team, however.
protection of the Award system to individual contracts, it was interesting to note that the majority (76%) felt secure in their employment (Table 7.15).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW SECURE DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR JOB?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very secure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 37 cases.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.15: MineCo Workers' Perceptions of Job Security.

Table 7.16, below, shows that the respondents' feeling of job security was primarily related to their evaluation of their own performance in the job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY DO YOU FEEL SECURE IN YOUR JOB?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good at job</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company recovering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know where we stand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 28 cases.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.16: MineCo Workers' Reasons for Job Security.

Chris articulated what was a popular comprehension of job security at MineCo, which is echoing the perception which was reported earlier in terms of legitimation and consent - that, as far as managements go, MineCo's is not too bad and they had set the changes in motion to increase long-term viability.

*I'm good at my job and I do the right thing by the company. I've never had any reason to worry about my job security on that score. And if the Together Success program works and the industry picks up, which it looks*
like it is, I'm pretty well set here I would think. (Chris, Tradesperson).

Matt felt that one Together Success initiative helped him feel secure - by giving him feedback on his performance.

*With Together Success, you do get to know how you stand with the company, and how valued you are because they have these performance assessments.* (Matt, Tradesperson).

John tied his fortunes with the company's and their improved position gave him a measure of security.

*The market's picking up now, so there's less chance of the company going down the tubes, so that makes my job a lot more secure.* (John, Tradesperson and Team Leader).

Where there was some job insecurity experienced, the principal reason given was that the employer couldn't be trusted (Table 7.17).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY DO YOU EXPERIENCE JOB INSECURITY?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can't trust employer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a secure industry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management doom stories</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No union protection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 9 cases.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.17: MineCo Workers' Reasons for Job Insecurity.

George's comment indicated this viewpoint, which reiterated some of the favouritism and arbitrariness which was attributed to some management personnel earlier in the case study.
Well, you wouldn't want to trust all the management here, and the attitude of professionals makes you think you're job's not safe. (George, Operator).

The insecurity of industry performance and the management 'doom stories' which represented this scenario to the workforce could also contribute to job insecurity, as Ian and Mick indicated.

*Now they let you know things whereas before they treated you like a mushroom. But that can make you a bit insecure for your job.* (Ian, Operator).

*Well, we've got no union backing now. And this is a mining company and they like to tell us bad news, which I can see their reason for, but it makes people think they're going to go under.* (Mick, Tradesperson).

It would seem that one of the costs of communicating to workers the company's relative competitiveness in the industry is that it may affect perceptions of job security. However, that only a minority of workers experienced insecurity when all had been apprised of the "facts" suggests that the fear of spreading panic would not be a reasonable rationale for management to withhold information from the workforce. The majority of MineCo respondents did not appear to be affected by job insecurity arising from the company's relative position in the marketplace.

**What's on Offer with Together Success**

The majority of the MineCo survey group (see Table 7.18) felt that Together Success had something to offer them, and these perceived benefits will be discussed presently. However, it is also apparent that a reasonably substantial minority (22%) were not prepared to credit Together Success with any desirable benefits accruing to the workforce. The following section analyses these disparate perceptions.
Table 7.18: MineCo Workers' Evaluation of what the Reform Process has to Offer Them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT DO THE NEW WORK ARRANGEMENTS HAVE TO OFFER YOU?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money and multiskilling</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future with more skills</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 37 cases.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nothing to Offer

Alan felt he had put a lot of effort into making the changes work, but has not been adequately recognised for his contribution. Without that recognition, Together Success could offer little that he believed would actually transpire.

It'd be nice to get some recognition. I got the second highest assessment and got no reward for that at all. I think if the system works and everyone works hard and as a team, it will be better. I agree with the philosophy, but it doesn't happen that way. There are individuals out there who want to keep it going, though. But you've got to stop people going back to the old ways and that's a constant job and I don't know how long your enthusiasm would last. (Alan, Tradesperson).

Charlie had thought there would be more opportunities to increase his skills.

Training opportunities definitely need to be increased before you could say there was anything much to offer from this. As it stands now, you say what you want to do and that's the last you hear of it. (Charlie, Operator).

Harry considered that the changes had been too dramatic and that management were beginning to push the limits of managerial
prerogative rather than seek more employee involvement - a view shared by Noel and Garth.

There's more "you'll do this" type of attitude from management now. They're starting to put their foot down. (Harry, Tradesperson).

They're tightening up and getting to be even more bastards now. (Noel, Operator).

When it comes to the crunch with management, it's "do as I say". So I don't think Together Success has made much of an impact on that type of attitude. In fact, it's probably made them more aggressive, if anything. In some ways at least. (Garth, Tradesperson).

Generally, although some respondents felt there was nothing to offer from Together Success owing to lack of recognition or opportunities or because of management's perceived greater power, the MineCo survey group felt that the Together Success package did have something to offer them.

Something to Offer
As was evident in Table 7.18, money was the principal sole source of benefit according to the MineCo workers, and the extra money obtainable from Together Success arose from the new performance bonus system called the Productivity Related Remuneration Package (PRR). Mick and Ward both liked the opportunity to earn more money and Ward appreciated the fact that he was spending less hours at work to earn it.

If the company makes $178 million profit, I get $15,000 in the hand! People really do notice the PRR - even if it's just a bit each month. (Mick, Tradesperson).

There's a bit of an incentive in the PRR and that makes things a bit more interesting, I suppose. Plus, this Together Success has also got the benefit that I can get the money and spend less hours here because I'm not working for the overtime. (Ward, Operator).

As in Ward's case, the ability to earn more was complemented for some workers by other opportunities, such as multiskilling or recognition, indicating that some workers felt that Together Success had increased their profile in the eyes of management.
What I’ve found better is the recognition for your extra effort - financially and in your responsibilities. You only got paid because you were here before. (Paul, Operator).

I’ve got flexibility in my hours now. I’m not bound to a forty-hour week. You’ve got more free time because you’re not clocking up the hours for your money. And you’ve got more responsibility and that makes me think, "I must be relatively important, so I’d better do a good job". (Chris, Tradesperson).

There’s more recognition for the jobs you do. Also in money, they tell you at your annual assessment whether you’ve been working to the benefit of the company as well as yourself. (Garry, Tradesperson).

MineCo management seemed to have benefited from the wide range of skills which their workforce brought to bear on the relatively unskilled job of operator. Many interviewees indicated a considerable breadth of employment experience - some having been small business owners or farmers, trades assistants or even qualified tradespeople. Thus, the opportunity for these workers to use existing skills was almost as important as developing new skills.

I’ve been able to get in and organise everything in the way it should be done. I’ve got some bookkeeping experience from a previous job and so I set up a register for the tools. Everything was in such a mess when I took over, but that tool store is my pride and joy now. (Rob, Storeperson).

I don’t think I’m being used to full advantage yet, but there’s definitely better use of the skills I’ve gained outside this place now. I’ve always felt a bit wasted in this job, but it’s a good earner for town and I have to admit that I’m appreciating the opportunity to stretch myself a bit more. So I’d have to say that the Together Success has had something to offer in that way. (Jack, Operator).

179 Garry’s observation of his contribution to the company’s fortunes over and above what he costs them should herald a new era in researching Marx’s theory of surplus value. It seems that companies need no longer obscure its generation! That workers could be proud of the fact that they were contributing more than they were paid in wages must surely stimulate further research into false consciousness.
Other workers appreciated the lifestyle changes which had accompanied Together Success. The new salary scale meant that, rather than hustling for overtime, workers were generally able to complete all their tasks within normal working hours, thus obviating the need for day staff to come in on the weekends. Matt's comment illustrates this perspective.

*We've got a better lifestyle out of these changes in some ways. You're not ruining your weekend just to be here for the overtime now.* (Matt, Tradesperson).

It thus seems that Together Success has been seen by the majority of the MineCo survey group as beneficial in terms of either money, skills, recognition or lifestyle, or some combination of them.

**The Perception that Work is Better (or Worse)**

A summary measure of the respondents' evaluation of the changes is provided by Table 7.19 which assesses whether the survey group think their jobs are now more fulfilling, better paid and more varied - in accordance with the Federal Government's expectations of workplace reform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job More Fulfilling</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
<th>Job Better Paid</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
<th>Job More Varied</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 37 cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Sample = 37 cases</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sample = 37 cases</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7.19:** MineCo Workers' Post-Reforms Opinion of their Jobs with Respect to Job Fulfillment, Payment and Variety.

As Table 7.19 shows, the majority (59%) of MineCo respondents felt the Together Success initiatives had not improved the sense of fulfillment they gained from their jobs, though the outcomes were better for remuneration and variation. Eighty-seven percent of the survey group declared their job was now better paid and 60% found it was now more varied.
Mick felt the company was well on its way to providing jobs which could be fulfilling and John believed that, although they were not yet there, there would be longer-term benefits for both company and workers arising from Together Success.

To see how far this company’s come in a short time is very much to their credit. I think there’s some way to go yet, but they’re definitely making some headway on this. Just the fact that you’re working for the PRR makes the job more fulfilling. (Mick, Tradesperson).

I wouldn’t say that the jobs here were more fulfilling as yet, but over time I would think it will be more rewarding to each individual and the company because they’ll be more adaptable. (John, Tradesperson and Team Leader).

Larry perceived his job would never be fulfilling and Don indicated how important the attitude of management was to workers' expectations of their jobs.

Basically, what my job is, is frustrating - not fulfilling. It’s just that type of a job. (Larry, Operator).

I think this type of thing depends very much on who you’re working with. Some shift bosses aren’t interested in the work and that sort of feeds down the line, you know? (Don, Operator).

There are obviously a range of factors which impact on a worker's perception of how fulfilling a job is, or can be. Part of that fulfillment may arise from the variety which the job offers. That their job is more varied since Together Success is apparent to 60% of the survey group, though there was a mixed response to the amount of variety a job should contain. Many workers in the Workshops appreciated the variety which would be forthcoming from the worker-initiated rotation scheme, as Chris explained:

We were empowered to set up the rotation scheme for maintenance or breakdown and workshop projects. Individuals will rotate to new teams, so that should help with variation. (Chris, Tradesperson).
For the production operators, though, variation in duties often simply meant more work.

*It's too varied. They've thrown all the quality stuff on us and we've got to get all those readings done in our lap. There's too many extra duties. I'd appreciate a lot less variation!* (Larry, Operator).

Table 7.19 has thus indicated that the changes associated with Together Success have largely met the government's objectives for Australian workplaces by making jobs at least better paid and more varied, if not always more fulfilling. Comments from the workforce, though, have shown that pay, fulfillment and variety are not bland, single-meaning criteria and these categories were often integrated when workers considered whether they liked work more now.

The majority (51%) of MineCo respondents felt that Together Success had not made their job any more enjoyable overall (Table 7.20).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO YOU LIKE WORK MORE NOW?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 37 cases.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.20: MineCo Workers' Post-Change Opinion of their Work.

Tim and Matt believed that it was the person rather than the job which made work enjoyable.

*I don't think these reforms have made me like work any more or any less. It's yourself that makes the job what it is - how much you like it and that.* (Tim, Operator).

*I've always enjoyed working and I get a bit disappointed sometimes if I haven't performed as well as I want.* So
it's not much different to me what sort of system I'm working under. (Matt, Tradesperson).

Other workers perceived it to be immaterial whether or not they liked their work - having a job was simply a necessity of life.

What a strange question. You've gotta come to work. (Charlie, Operator).

It's a job and you've gotta have one. It wouldn't matter where I worked or how much I liked it. If I won the Lotto, I'd be gone! (Garth, Tradesperson).

We're not here to like it. People come to work to get money to live - and that's it. (Tom, Operator).

Chris, though, found the job was more than just a necessity - it had the ability to affect all areas of his life. He offered a perspective which indicated a thoughtful assessment of the change process on his experience of work and life.

I'm getting back to liking work again. At first, Mick and I used to spend hours after work discussing things, working out good ways to do things and that. But we went too far. We needed to realise that we couldn't make all the changes on our own. Other people had to be involved - especially people at the top and other blokes in the shop. We couldn't carry it all ourself, even though we were really for it. You can't keep getting pissed off with people you work with because they don't want to change as much as you or as fast as you or something. Anyway, finally Mick's girlfriend walked out and my wife was totally sick of me going on and on about it and we sort of came to our senses and came out of it. So now we just knock off and have a beer. (Chris, Tradesperson).

Fourteen percent of the survey group didn't like work as much since Together Success. This was sometimes related to workload:

They're trying to make us do more work. That's what's behind all this cross-skilling. It's so they don't need as many people - they just make us do more. (Barry, Operator).

The work hasn't changed at all. Not one iota. What's changed is the amount of it. It's just exactly the same but
with more on your plate. Who would like that more? (Keith, Operator).

Often, it was the social aspects of work which affected the worker's enjoyment of the job. Harry and Patrick illustrate the complexity inherent in the question, "Do you like work more now?" Work is not only the job, it's the social environment within which the job is performed.

I like the work more now, but the atmosphere's gone downhill. And you know I think that has an influence on you. (Harry, Tradesperson).

The social life at work is bad now. There's a lot of bad morale and that gets to you after a while. (Patrick, Tradesperson).

Where they didn't like work any more since the Together Success initiatives, MineCo respondents indicated that a particular work system was immaterial because personal attitude affected your enjoyment of work, rather than the nature of the work itself; that liking work was irrelevant because it was one of life's necessities; that the reforms had resulted in more work, rather than more enjoyable work; or that the enjoyment of work was tied up with a host of social factors apart from and affecting the job.

Around a third of the MineCo respondents, though, did like work more now and one reason was because of the added responsibility for planning or decision-making which had accrued from the Together Success initiatives.

I think it's definitely improved for the better here. I've got more ownership over my job now because I'm left to run my section as I see fit. It's your own decision what you do and you wear the consequences. (Greg, Operator).

Yeah, I like it better now. It's more interesting because I know exactly what I'm doing and it's taking me a quarter of the time. And I don't have some geezer on my tail. (Steve, Operator).

Management's attitude to the workforce also seems to have helped some workers like their jobs more at MineCo.
What I like more about it now is that management seem to be more involved in the changes now. Like, they're asking us for input and they do honestly seem interested. I feel a bit as though my experience is worth something, not just like I'm a dumb shit-kicker. (Wally, Operator).

They're working more as team leaders now not like bosses which they were very much into before. So they try to get you involved more and I kind of like that somehow. (Austin, Operator).

It's a bit better now and I think management have pulled up their socks. They've helped blokes out in the field sometimes, and the working conditions are better now. (Vince, Operator).

Where workers did find their job more enjoyable was in areas over which management has considerable control - either in the devolution of responsibilities, or in the attitude they display to workers in the structures they set up, or in their personal dealings with them. These factors are amalgamated in the final comment, representative of many that were made by MineCo workers, which comes from Bruce. His view seems to capture the "reality" of both the workplace reforms and the workforce expectation of them.

Look, I know it's not perfect and they're really out for all they can get from us. But it is better now. Management are more approachable, for one thing. There's more, "what do you think?" Okay, we all know they'll usually do things their way, but at least they'll ask you. And that has to be an improvement. (Bruce, Operator).

Summary: MineCo Workers' Judgement of Together Success
Notwithstanding the company's relatively poor market share and the downturn in the industry, and despite the recent redundancies, MineCo respondents reported a favourable perception of their job security - basing this upon their own job performance. Where job insecurity did exist, it was likely to be associated with either the industry's economic climate or management arbitrariness. Although some workers felt Together Success had nothing to offer them in terms of extra recognition or the ability to gain more skills, the majority of MineCo respondents believed that they were now able to earn more and had the potential to learn more skills as a result of the reforms. However, regardless of these outcomes, MineCo workers reported that they did not find work any more fulfilling now
and, though it was better paid and more varied, the majority of respondents did not like work any more than before.

CONCLUSION

Thirty-seven production and maintenance workers at MineCo, in rural Western Australia, were surveyed by questionnaire and interview about their experiences associated with the corporate management workplace reform initiative, Together Success. The case study firstly examined workers' consent to and legitimation of the perceived role of management and the desirable role of workers in change; and secondly analysed workers' perceptions of the imperatives, processes and outcomes of change.

Legitimation and Consent

MineCo workers consented to and legitimated management's right to control the organisational agenda in the following areas:

- determination of the broad organisational direction; and
- those leadership and authority functions workers perceived as necessary to reach the destination prescribed by that direction.

This legitimacy and consent could be mitigated by management being perceived as

- applying outdated management and supervisory methods which were not in concert with the philosophy associated with Together Success;
- engaging in arbitrariness or favouritism with respect to access to promotion or training opportunities.

Even when these perceptions of management were held, however, the MineCo survey group upheld the general legitimacy accorded to the reform process.

Workers did not legitimate or consent to management control if management sought to
too closely interfere with the worker's discretion about how to achieve job-level organisational objectives;
question workers' effort ratios;
impose work methods which made work "harder" rather than "smarter";
promulgate the view that a single status workforce was evidenced in the "staff" status accruing to workers under Together Success reforms.

Extending the basic theoretical grid which was posited in Chapter Three, Diagram 7.4 summarises the MineCo survey group's legitimation and consent behaviours and attitudes.

There was a broad acceptance among MineCo respondents of the Together Success initiative as a means of increasing the commercial viability of the site. In working towards this perceived legitimate objective, respondents favourably compared their post-reform work effort with that which they had previously expended on their jobs. This extra effort primarily went into thinking about work processes, and how to do things more effectively, but would not be continued in the face of continual opposition or lack of enthusiasm from management. The initiation of change from the shop floor level can be fraught with difficulty primarily because of the reliance on other people to push initiatives further up the hierarchy. While workers don't perceive they have the autonomy, or training to exercise autonomy, to pursue the initiatives throughout all steps of the change process, it would seem likely that they will, in time, decrease their initiation of change.

It appears that the survey group had a definite picture of what was obtainable from Together Success and was able to critically examine the company rhetoric, particularly with respect to the existence of a single status workforce. That "them and us" attitudes remained at MineCo was evident to the survey group, who did not seem to find this as unconscionable a reality as it appeared to corporate management. Management were perceived to have different functions from the workers, and to play another type of role in the organisation. Both workers and management were seen to be contributing to organisational objectives, but with varying degrees of emphasis and in different ways,
and the respondents appeared to find this relatively unalterable and appropriate.

**Granting Consent and Legitimation**

MineCo workers granted their consent and legitimation to management control by their
- Acceptance of quality standards
- Commitment to organisational goals
- Perceiving a need for strong leadership
- Belief in the benefits of change
- Acceptance of some commonality of interest between workers and management
- Adherence to managerial instructions in preference to craft or traditional principles
- Experiencing a sense of trust
- Striving for better performance
- Desiring to remain with the organisation
- Conscientious application to work
- Belief that management rightly sets the organisational-level agenda and determines organisational objectives
- Acceptance of changes to the work process which mean workers are working "smarter".

**Withholding Consent and Granting Legitimation**

MineCo workers granted their legitimation but withheld their consent from management control by their
- Support for other workers
- Acceptance of work problems as inevitable
- Lack of enthusiasm for managerial strategies, such as lean production and team structures, where working towards increased organisational effectiveness is seen as a legitimate goal but where these strategies are not seen by workers to contribute to reaching that goal.

**Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation**

MineCo workers granted their consent but withheld their legitimation from management control by their
- Expectation of within-job control while working towards management-defined objectives
- Manipulation of time to the workforce's advantage
- Complying with instructions, but not legitimating what workers perceive as outdated management and supervisory methods which seek to decrease a worker's autonomy.

**Withholding Consent and Legitimation**

MineCo workers withheld their consent and legitimation from management control by their
- Self-determination of the effort level
- Individualisation of rules to best suit the worker's job and thus better tailor it to organisational objectives
- Desiring worker participation in change so that workforce expertise is available to management
- Avoidance of work methods which mean workers have to work harder rather than smarter.
- Refusal to accept the notion that MineCo worked on a system of meritorious promotion and access to training opportunities.

*Diagram 7.4: MineCo Workers' Consent and Legitimation: Locating the Constructs on the Theoretical Grid.*
The men in the MineCo survey group, then, could be seen as consenting to and legitimating management's direction of the broad organisational picture and leading workers some way to achieving organisational objectives. This broad legitimacy and granting of consent could be mitigated by workers' perceptions of management strategies or actions as arbitrary or indicative of favouritism, and was withheld if changes intensified, rather than rationalised, the work effort (that is to say, if work was made harder rather than smarter). MineCo workers felt they were better placed than management to fit their job to the organisational objectives and to determine the appropriate amount and type of effort needed to reach those objectives - a perception that was evident in the respondents' interpretation of the process and outcomes of the Together Success Reforms.

Experiences of Change

The MineCo respondents perceived the Together Success initiatives to arise from three imperatives - the need to be more efficient, decrease costs and gain the involvement of workers in the decision-making process. These imperatives were seen as interrelated; more efficient work practices would lead to cost savings and therefore organisational competitiveness, and more employee involvement in designing the work process would enhance efficiency. While management was seen as the principal change agent, it was noted that it was only with workforce cooperation that changes would be successfully implemented. That workers perceived Together Success to offer good opportunities for the workforce, particularly with respect to increased pay, was the principal means for facilitating this cooperation with the change process. Workers also believed, though, that the acceptance of the common law individual contracts was assisted by the lack of union involvement at the site.

MineCo workers, although apprehensive about Together Success, had had many of their fears and skepticism laid to rest by the time this study was conducted. It was surprising that the change-over to individual contracts had not occasioned more concern, but it did not appear to be an issue with the survey group. This may be because they were only on their first contract, which offered better pay outcomes than the Award. It
should not be concluded from interviews conducted at this stage that such satisfaction would necessarily continue. This sanguine attitude was also evidenced in the respondents' perceived lack of disruption accompanying the change process. Where the minority of workers did experience some personal disruption, it was due to too great an intrusion of their job or work changes into their personal lives.

MineCo respondents perceived they had little or no effective input into or influence over the change process and, thus, over its outcomes. Workers in the survey group had a favourable opinion of their job security and generally based this on their expertise in the job. Such job insecurity as was experienced was associated with managerial arbitrariness or favouritism and continued concerns about the company's economic outlook. Yet, although MineCo respondents felt Together Success was beneficial in terms of either money, skills or recognition for effort, the workers in the survey group did not generally gain any more enjoyment from their work than prior to the reforms. Nearly all the men agreed that their job was better paid and a majority believed that it was more varied (though this was not always seen as a benefit - variation could, in some instances, equate to extra work). The PRR bonus system helped the job seem more fulfilling, but most workers did not perceive their job as generally offering more fulfilment as yet, though there was some potential noted for the longer-term.

It was apparent from the survey group's responses that there was no one, acceptable dimension for assessing a job's ability to provide some satisfaction for a worker. Indeed, it seems that the job is only part of the experience of work. MineCo workers did not generally like work any more since the Together Success initiatives, even though it was perceived that some aspects of the job were better. In similar vein, there appeared to be a range of expectations of their work - some respondents did not look to their jobs to provide a meaningful experience; others situated the job in a social context and evaluated its benefits in social as well as monetary terms.

The workers in the MineCo survey group could thus be seen to grant a broad legitimacy and consent to the Together Success strategies as a means of improving both the company's and their own, fortunes. They
did not perceive that they were able to influence the course of these reforms, but believed they could have made a significant contribution had they been able to do so. When evaluating the reforms, the workers upheld the increased pay and access to skills acquisition as beneficial outcomes. They did not, however, generally find that they liked their work more as a result of the Together Success reforms.

In conclusion, then, the workers in the MineCo survey group have indicated their ability to distinguish between good and bad outcomes for themselves and the organisation - each seeming equally "real", as the materialist approach would suggest. Investigating the subjective experience of change has contributed to a greater understanding of the objective experience and indicated the value of a non-deterministic approach to the analysis of change. This argument will be elaborated in Chapter Nine.
CHAPTER EIGHT

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AT POPCO

THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE

In many respects, the rationale for change in the manufacturing industry was the blueprint for Australia's organisational reform agenda. It is this sector of the economy which has been the powerhouse of reform throughout the nation. By the 1980's, a number of challenges were seen to be facing the Australian economy:

- The trends and relationships pursued by major foreign economies. By the early 1980's there had been an extraordinary integration of financial markets. Australia is a price-taker and therefore sensitive to these factors. Government economic policies were therefore subject to the vagaries of world trends in interest and exchange rates;

- The emergence of Japan and other South-East Asian nations as major manufacturers, influencing traditional patterns of world trade and payments;

- The increasing protectionism of the Economic Community (EC), Japan and the USA with respect to agricultural imports which weakened the export-earning capacity of primary product exporters like Australia;

- The increasing internationalisation of production and research with an accompanying internationalisation of the division of labour. Components were therefore being produced in the cheapest labour markets, and manufacture being located near the largest consumer markets. It became more attractive for Australian consumers to import and local manufacturing could not compete.

(After, The Senate Standing Committee (SSC), 1988:7-9).

In short, these global changes had caused Australia to have one of the highest levels of government and private sector foreign debt among industrialised nations, and a poor balance of trade with imports greatly exceeding exports. In a global trend of "manufactures being the fastest-
growing sector of world trade”, Australia was unique among industrialised countries in not having increased its ration of merchandise exports to GDP since the 1950’s (Capling and Galligan, 1992:141). Manufacturing had declined in relative importance in the Australian economy between the 1960's and the 1980's; employment in the sector falling from 26% (1966-67) to 16.2% (1986-87) and the sector's share of GDP going from 25% to 17% in the same time period. Primary sector commodity exports could no longer be relied upon to ensure we remained "The Lucky Country", and it came to be seen that a "more efficient manufacturing sector [was] needed to meet international competition in both domestic and overseas markets" (SSC, 1988:9). An increase in manufacturing exports, in particular, was seen to be able to contribute to relieving the current account deficit; contribute to employment growth; and result in a manufacturing sector that was more efficient overall by being based on economies of scale (Capling and Galligan, 1992:141-142).

Australian manufacturing industry has been protected by tarriff barriers since the beginning of the century. Originally intended to stimulate local the development of local markets and encourage manufacturing, the changing international trading sector has caused protectionism to be widely, though often contentiously, viewed as obsolete. By the late 1970's, this protectionism was seen to be increasingly problematic for Australia's performance in what were emerging as global markets. The following problems were identified as particularly relevant to the viability of the manufacturing sector achieving the aim of effecting Australia's international recovery:

• The lack of an export culture, high penetration of transnational companies into Australian markets and lack of private sector funding and research in the manufacturing industry (Capling and Galligan, 1992:118);

• A commodity-driven currency, high cost of capital and infrastructural impediments (particularly inefficient ports), which were seen to mitigate against export (Australian Manufacturing Council, 1990:135);

• Reliability of supply problems which were adversely affected by industrial disputes (SSC, 1988:70).
After the terms of trade "collapsed" in 1985, the government responded by signalling its "commitment to improving Australia's competitiveness by hastening the pace of structural reform" and further reducing "defensive industry assistance". By 1988, they were ready to challenge tariff protection and capitalise on a depreciated Australian dollar by launching an export drive (Capling and Galligan, 1992:140-141). Management in the manufacturing sector was exhorted not only to respond to change, but to initiate it: "to develop new products, new processes and new markets" (SSC, 1988:67).

The Role of Labour in the Manufacturing Recovery

When the macro-economic strategies of the early and mid-1980's had been seen to have been unsuccessful in stimulating business investment in the manufacturing sector, the 1987 Hawke Labor Government acted to "focus on reducing barriers to efficiency through micro-economic reform in key areas such as the labour market" (Capling and Galligan, 1992:152). The "small and scattered domestic market, poor marketing skills, and high labour costs" were seen as impediments to efficiency (Capling and Galligan, 1992:131). Employee attitudes were also viewed as problematic. The Senate Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology (1988) recommended that the manufacturing sector establish a framework of workplace relations

within which, in response to improved management practices, the workforce accepts that greater productivity not only poses no threat to jobs but is, in the long run, the only guarantee of their continuance. (SSC, 1988:73).

The Senate Standing Committee (SSC, 1988:81) believed that labour cost and the effectiveness of labour deployment were "key factors in determining the competitiveness of a business". Moreover, significant industry players such as the Metal Trades Industry Association, the ACTU and the AMC all urged workforce-management co-operation as fundamental to increased productivity (ACTU/TDC, 1987; AMC, 1986; MTIA, 1986). From the union perspective, supporting workplace change has been seen as a "key lever of union strategy" (Hampson, Ewer and Smith, 1994:232) and one essential aspect of ensuring Australia's international competitiveness has been to keep labour costs relative to
productivity gains (Fynmore and Hill, 1992:xlii). The general orientation to work of the Australian people, variously described as apathetic and relaxed, was viewed by the Senate Standing Committee (SSC, 1988:49) as "a vital element in manufacturing sector rejuvenation".

"The community generally will be more conscious of the economic underpinnings of our standard and quality of life", declared the AMC (1990:43). The AMC had directed its energies to raising public awareness of "deficiencies in the manufacturing sector and the need for fundamental structural change" (Capling and Galligan, 1992:130-131). Thus, workers in the manufacturing industry were exhorted to cooperate with management in increasing the competitiveness of the sector by agreeing to work process reorganisation which would increase productivity, and accepting that wage increases would be contingent upon that improved productivity. In its Recommendations, the Senate Standing Committee (1988:61) proposed that:

Management should recognise and accept the need for more investment in human resources - in training and diversification of skills, improved industrial relations and in greater involvement of the workforce in shop-floor decisions. (Recommendation 4.13.3).

The "yardstick" for improvement in the manufacturing sector was to become internationally competitive or "go under" (Deeley, 1991:335). In order to achieve this goal and be successfully measured against this yardstick, the AMC believed that the workplace relations of a revitalised manufacturing sector should have:

- Teamwork, flexibility and an open style of management;
- Highly skilled workforces and continuous training;
- International best practice as the benchmark of performance;
- Single or dual, rather than a multi-union, presence;
- Plant level negotiations within a centralised bargaining framework.

(After AMC, 1990:43).

The organisational changes initiated to implement solutions to the challenges facing one manufacturer, and their impact on workers in that firm, is the subject of the following case study.
Responding To The Challenges: Organisational Change At Popco

PopCo is a Western Australian manufacturing company which is a subsidiary of what the AMC has termed a ‘multidomestic’ - "a class of firms that have strong competitive positions in Australia that they have replicated by acquisitions abroad, but which tend to focus mainly on domestic markets both here and overseas rather than on producing tradeable goods" (AMC, 1990:135). Originally built by a US company with local management, the PopCo plant was established in Perth in 1984, and was soon purchased by a local multi-industry group. Its current owners (who are based in Sydney) assumed control of PopCo in 1993. PopCo has had a history of restructuring throughout its existence. In its early years, shift patterns changed from single, to multiple, to continuous shifts in accordance with fluctuations in product demand. PopCo workers have experienced continuous refinements to the labour process during the past decade, as the company undertook award restructuring in the late 1980's, flirting with semi-autonomous work groups and various schemes to align themselves with best practice procedures and increase their competitive advantage.

PopCo had experienced some loss of competitive advantage in the four years prior to the commencement of this study, owing to a poor supply record and a depressed local marketplace. There were on-going quality problems with the product, especially with respect to meeting the expectations of the Asian market, which they sought to penetrate. Shareholder returns had been low, with high costs and variable output reducing dividends. In response, PopCo undertook a major restructuring program, which commenced in 1992:

- Twenty-five percent reduction in the operations-level workforce, arising from a shift closure; with a provision in the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) of 1994 for a further reduction of two workers per shift by the end of 1995;
- Decision to run two production lines at all times with a 5-day roster of 12 hour shifts plus overtime as needed to provide coverage;
- Increase of labour productivity via the removal of demarcations and increasing flexibility;
• Introduction of team-based production units and some job rotation to facilitate a more autonomous work-flow, where problem-solving could occur at site;

• Introduction of on-line quality control (QC). Where there had previously been a QC officer on each shift, production workers were now responsible for on-line and computerised checks.

The goals of the reform process, in terms of organisational expectations (as stated in the EBA, Clause 8(f)(ii)(aa-gg)), are to:

Provide a safe and happy place where people are proud to work in a spirit of team-work and ownership of the goals, are fairly remunerated, well trained, have access to career paths and achieve satisfaction from their work effort.

Provide quality products, communication and services at world’s best standards and better.

Provide shareholders with a satisfactory return on funds employed.

Establish an attitude of customer focus by being polite, responsive, honest and innovative in all our dealings.

To establish a mentality of continuous improvement by always questioning what we do and looking for ways to do it better.

To be honest and ethical in all dealings with staff, suppliers, customers and each other.

Above all to be recognised as the best [product] supplier (as measured via our customers’ rating system).

PopCo's operating objectives are not solely determined at the local level, responding as they do to corporate initiatives generated by the parent company. The parent has extensive export interests in Asia and the Asia-Pacific region and, although local markets were relatively sound at the time of this case study, the parent requires a competitive advantage to be met in the export marketplace. Customer feedback was thus an important variable in creating the imperative for changes at the local level. PopCo has a Productivity Improvement Program which indicates ideal targets which, if met or exceeded, accrue an employee benefit. The performance indicators attached to this program are:
• Production Targets:
  Spoilage;
  Customer complaints and returns;
  Number of good units per man-hour;
  Raw material quality.
• Accident targets.
• Quality.
• Downtime.

The Production Incentive Scheme, which averages unspoiled output across all three shifts, is paid as a productivity bonus if targets are met. In addition, PopCo has introduced an Employee Gain-Sharing Scheme (part of the parent company's employee benefits scheme), in which 95% of the workforce are involved. The wages at PopCo are very high for the area (the average production worker's wage working a twelve-hour shift 5 days per week with overtime, is around $40,000 per annum). There have been no industrial disputes causing a loss of production time since the shift redundancy in 1992. Although further redundancies are required, the progress toward them is determined under the terms of the EBA. In the case of the further restructuring of the labour process, the Consultative Committee must be involved, and the grievance procedures also accommodate union involvement. The EBA also outlines the terms under which PopCo workers are permitted to choose the combinations of hours which will constitute their rosters.

PopCo is a registered provider of training and is involved in the Level C Metals Award training scheme, Engineering Production Certificate (EPC) Modules. Three people on each shift have completed the Train the Trainer course, and the interface between the company and the local technical college to facilitate training courses has been finalised. However, no certificated training had been made available to the workforce at the time of this study, although there had been two "training launches" in the past three years. Team leaders have received some team training with management through an outdoor adventure group, but there had been no competency-based on-the-job training supplied on the shopfloor, and the team training had not yet been made available to team members. Although the company expected training courses to be offered through the technical college in the near future,
production workers were working 12-hour shifts as minima, with overtime to provide coverage and meet demand, which suggests they might not be released to attend courses. If they are able to attend college on days off (difficult with rotating shifts), workers will receive ordinary time plus 11.66% shift loading for their attendance.

PopCo, then, on the face of things at least, appears to be well-poised to take up the challenges facing manufacturers in the global marketplace of the 1990s. The implementation of organisational changes and the workers' experiences of these reforms provide the subjects for the following discussion, which commences with an analysis of workers' consent to and legitimation of management's role in directing the reforms and labour process generally.

LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT TO CHANGE: THE POPCO WORKERS' PERSPECTIVE

Overview Of The Research Process

Application was made by the researcher to PopCo's Technical Services Manager to explore workers' experiences of the reforms initiated since the 1992 restructuring. The initial approach was made by telephone after inquiries to the Metals and Engineering Workers' Union (WA Branch) had indicated that PopCo had recently undergone organisational changes which might be suitable for the purposes of the study. The Technical Services Manager reacted favourably to the proposal, and arranged a meeting with the Metals shop steward to discuss the project. On meeting with the shop steward, who asked to examine the questionnaires, permission was granted to interview volunteers during work times. The company provided an empty office near the shop floor, and the shop steward spoke to job delegates on each shift, urging workforce participation. A letter (Appendix 3) was posted on the workers' noticeboard, and interview dates were scheduled according to day-shift rosters for each of the three shifts. The company asked for feedback, and it was agreed, after discussion with the shop steward, that aggregate feedback on issues deemed relevant to the researcher (in accordance with
the University's guidelines for ethical and confidential research practices) would be provided to management in the form of a brief Report at the conclusion of the study.

Shift superintendents were nominated as liaison points to coordinate absences from the shopfloor in order that workers' attendance at interviews should minimise interferences in the production process. Each interview lasted between three-quarters and one hour. No interruptions were permitted during the interviews, which commenced with the Background Questionnaire and concluded with the respondents' individually completing the Theoretical Questionnaire.

The Popco Sample

Twenty-eight PopCo workers were surveyed, comprising approximately two-thirds of the shopfloor production and maintenance staff at its Perth manufacturing site. The survey group was exclusively male, as was the population from which the respondents were drawn. All three shifts were represented in the survey. Each shift had two teams: front end and back end. The front end maintainers feed the raw materials onto the fully-automated production line and the back end maintainers oversee the progress of the product down the line and into the storage area. Midway along the line, the product is painted, and two decorators per shift (who are classified as maintainers) conduct this process.

Seventy-one percent of the survey group were process maintainers (Table 8.1). The sample also included two fitters, who perform structural maintenance on the line, and 5 team leaders. There is one team leader for each of the two teams per shift, and they work on the line in addition to coordinating the activities of the men and liaising with the shift superintendent (one of whom was included in the sample). The shift superintendent coordinates the production run and appears to be the first managerial point of contact for production staff. He was included because

180 Called "maintainers" in their EBA, these workers described themselves as either "operators" or "machine operators" in the interviews. The term "maintainers" has been used here because of its formal status and because it more accurately describes the work process "Maintains optimum line efficiency in conjunction with other team members" (Appendix B - Job Descriptions - Clause 3 (d) (i), Enterprise Bargaining Agreement).
neither he, the men, nor management considered his to be a managerial position. Three of the team leaders were tradespersons who didn't work in their trades, and one other used to be the shop steward. All except one were upgraded from maintainer positions and all were selected by management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION LEVEL</th>
<th>Number of Workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintainer</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift Superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 28 cases.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.1: PopCo Workers by Position.

Table 8.2 indicates that approximately two-thirds of the sample group have been at PopCo longer than 5 years; three respondents (the shift superintendent and two maintainers) having been with the company since its inception. No respondents had been with PopCo for less than two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LENGTH OF SERVICE</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-4 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 28 cases.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.2: PopCo Workers by Length of Service.
The PopCo sample can therefore be described as an exclusively male survey group, comprising 66% of the company's shopfloor production and maintenance staff at its manufacturing base in Perth, Western Australia. Maintainers (20) dominated the sample, and 5 of the possible 6 team leaders from each of the three shifts were included. Two fitters and one shift superintendent completed the survey group, which generally had had a long tenure with PopCo - 66% of the sample having five or more years' service with the company.

Worker Consent To And Legitimation Of Change

This section examines whether and how workers consent to and legitimise management control in general and management prerogative in the change process in particular, seeking information not only about direct forms of control but also about the bureaucratic, organisational-level control structures and worker beliefs about where the right to control labour effort resides. The discussion will begin with a consideration of workers' how workers do consent to and legitimate the change process and management's role in general; and will go on to consider the attitudinal and behavioural variations of according and withholding consent and legitimation.

Granting Consent and Legitimation

The following section examines whether and how workers consent to and legitimise management control. Table 8.3 (over) indicates that a large majority of PopCo workers surveyed believed that management had the right to initiate change if such change was predicated on a quality imperative. In this case, PopCo workers were aware that, although their firm had the monopoly on the product's supply in Western Australia, the price, quality and reliability of supply of the product was important if market share and consumer demand was to be maintained.

Gaining the Competitive Edge

Question One indicates that the survey group generally (86%) consented to and legitimated management's desire to effect changes which were based on a quality imperative.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree %</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>No opinion %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1. Change for quality = Change Ok</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Mgt/wkrs are working to same goals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. I'm here to do a job, not decide how to do it.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. Mgt can trust me to do my best.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5. Management do good job.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6. Benefit in Change?</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11. Commitment to Org Goals</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12. Mgt/wkrs are working to similar goals</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13. I strive for better performance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14. Need bureaucratic procedures</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16. Mgt/wkrs are a team here</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17. Mgt should determine fair day's work.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.3: Granting Consent and Legitimation: PopCo Workers. (n=28).

Gary's comment, though, is indicative of the general feeling at PopCo - management did make changes in the interests of improved company performance, but there was always a degree of opportunism associated with their strategies.

*It's all market forces, apart from the fact that the company's always trying to get a better deal out of us. The customers jacked up - especially on the quality and supply.* (Gary, Maintainer).
Despite the opportunism, almost all (96%) of the PopCo respondents could see the benefits in change (q.6) - and 71% of the survey group were committed to the organisation's goals (q.11).

Ken and Graham indicated how, in a competitive environment, workers could legitimate and consent to company strategies whose choice was perceived to be constrained by the activities of other players in the marketplace.

"You've got to go with the flow. If you've got one company doing it you've got to do it too, especially with the Standards." (Ken, Maintainer).

"You've got to have change and the company has to progress and as things grow you have to grow with it. I've seen that many yards close down in England because no-one there was prepared to move with the times." (Graham, Maintainer).

Graham's observation hints at the important role which management and workforce cooperation has to play in achieving the ability to "move with the times" and questions 2 and 12 sought to discover whether PopCo workers perceived that they and management had a shared goal orientation. Around sixty percent of the survey group perceived this to be so, but only 39% of respondents believed that management and workers were a team (q.16). Bearing in mind that the goals to which management should be striving, in the workforce view, was to achieve a competitive advantage via a quality product, there was a wide legitimacy and consent directed to management activities which expressed that shared goal orientation.

"Management do seem to be more committed to the plant now." (Neil, Maintainer).

"They seem to be dedicated to changing the place for the better." (Rodney, Maintainer).

However, there was some residual distrust of management's objectives, which seemed to make workers suspect that management had goals which were not shared by the workforce.
It very much depends who it is with management. With the consultation and stuff, some of them just do it because it's a good tool. Others actually see it as better. (Adrian, Team Leader).

To a degree, they're more consultative, but they're still a bit secretive on things when they want to be. (Michael, Maintainer).

I suppose our attitudes still need to change a bit on the shop floor. Most of the guys have changed and want to give it a go, but we're still a bit suss about what they're really trying to do. (Sean, Maintainer).

That corporate management in Sydney is perceived to play a large role in directing local managerial initiatives may contribute to this sense of unease at the shopfloor level.

Management here has to change its attitudes depending on what the guys over east say. (Ernie, Maintainer).

He's all go for teamwork, but he's pushed by the corporate level for it. (Alan, Maintainer).

There was overwhelming (93%) support for the notion that PopCo workers could be trusted by management to do their best (q.4) and 72% of respondents reported that they strove for better performance (q.13). Conscientious attention to the job had payoffs not only for the achievement of organisational goals, but also for the worker's ease of work, as Phil, Gary and Ken indicated.

The better the place runs, the less you do. It's a funny place. Ninety-eight percent of the job is waiting for things to come up. (Phil, Maintainer).

It's in the interests of your job satisfaction that you take the effort to set up the machines properly so they run properly. If you're slack, you'll just be hassling with it for the whole shift. (Gary, Maintainer).

If we have good productivity, it's a better working day for us, too, because it means the line is running itself and we're not clearing jams. (Ken, Operator).

Workers could experience a sense of pride from doing their job well and, as Doug's comment shows, beating the idiosyncrasies of the machines.
We broke the production record the other day and we were all that proud! I even worked an extra 10 minutes without pay to make sure we made it! It’s funny how it gets you like that - I mean, I’m the bloody shop steward! (Doug, Maintainer).

The reason the machines do jam so often, though, is because maintenance often comes second to production.

We’ve got to keep stuff going and there’s always a big battle between getting the productivity out and doing the maintenance. (Jason, Fitter).

They never do a good job here. They always patch things up instead of biting the bullet and getting things fixed properly. (John, Maintainer).

John indicated that management needed to take decisions which would have better long-term outcomes for productivity. This view was supported by the survey group’s response for the need for strong leadership (q.18). While the majority (64%) of PopCo respondents believed strong leadership was necessary in management, that leadership needed to be directed to achieving greater organisational effectiveness, and not to an arbitrary imposition of management’s will on the workforce.

We do need to improve our quality here. Management need to set standards for certain things. The handling of the product is bad and cleanliness is a problem here. (Ernie, Maintainer).

We couldn’t keep going the way we were. You need to give people a goal to where we’re heading. (Darryl, Team Leader).

[The CEO] came and saw it was a strong union place. He tried to split three shifts up and tried to divide us - and he tried to spur everybody up against the union. Now with the teamwork and the consultative committee he’s had to bite the bullet and accept the union. But now he’s lost our trust, so he’ll have to try and get it back and that’ll be hard. (Warren, Maintainer).
Leadership could also be demonstrated by management delivery on their promises. If they didn’t, the workers could withdraw their consent and legitimation from the managerial initiative.

Management can be a problem in not meeting their commitments. You start thinking, "what’s the point?".  
(Adrian, Team Leader).

Jason believed management couldn’t meet its commitments because the parent company held the purse strings, and he felt this compromised local management’s ability to effectively ensure increased productivity.

More changes need to be made to the technology here but they can’t get the money because it’s all controlled over east.  
(Jason, Fitter).

Doug, too, saw the role of a strong local management as essential to the continued improvement of PopCo’s fortunes.

We need a lot more change here - right across the board. The machines need work, we need training; management here need to get their act together.  
(Doug, Maintainer).

Limits to Consent and Legitimation

The workers in the PopCo survey group saw management’s leadership role in terms of providing a framework wherein organisational objectives could be met. That framework might include identifying markets and providing training or better machinery, but did not include interfering with the way workers performed their jobs. A large majority (79%) of respondents believed that workers, not management, should decide how to do the job (q.3), with a quarter of that group strongly disagreeing that this was management’s right. Working on a production line, with the work process largely dictated by the needs of the machinery, it would seem surprising that workers had such a strong desire for job control. It would seem reasonable to suppose that they would capitulate to the monotonous rhythm of the line and, to some degree, this is indeed the case. Yet the issue of job control was approached by these production line workers as available within a certain context.

I’ve got total control within the context of the job.  
(John, Maintainer).
Even team leaders noted the importance of context in structuring their expectations of job control.

*How I do things is up to me so long as I get a result at the end of the day - within the context of the place, that is.* (Darryl, Team Leader).

*I can prioritise what I need to do, or what I want the blokes to do. Unless there's a breakdown, of course!* (Barry, Team Leader).

Part of the context is the quality and productivity imperatives earlier identified as being considered legitimate by the PopCo survey group.

*If it's not unsafe and the outcome will be the same with respect to the quality, I might do things in a way that suits me which could be different to how some other blokes would do it. It depends on the job really.* (Peter, Maintainer).

*I've got a lot of control over how I do the job, so long as [the product] comes out the other end in the right manner.* (Gary, Maintainer).

What is not part of the legitimate context is managerial incursions which further erode job control. One of the most notable issues at PopCo was that of supervision, and management's ability to design an appropriate supervisory framework. Sixty-eight percent of the PopCo survey group did not consider that management did a good job (q.5) and, although they were deemed to be working towards similar goals, 61% of respondents did not consider management and workers to be a team (q.16). Each had certain roles to play, and it was not part of management's role to intrude too closely into a worker's within-job performance.

*There's two team leaders, management and the supervisor. It's too top-heavy and everyone knows their job anyway.* (Mark, Maintainer).

*At the moment, we're oversupervised. On the front end, you've got 5 people, including one team leader and a supervisor. Morale drops when you're that top-heavy.* (Warren, Maintainer).

Brian indicated that he would work towards the organisational objectives without the constant supervision.
We've got too much supervision. I do my job properly, and I'd like to feel like I'm trusted more. (Brian, Maintainer).

Paul and Barry, both team leaders, also noted the detrimental effect on trust relations which were exacerbated by the over-supervision.

Instead of saying, "you guys can control this", they say "youse guys are going to control this but we'll have the last word if necessary". There's still a trust problem, see? (Paul, Team Leader).

We need to get a better structure with the supervisory and team leader roles - we don't need too many blokes at the helm. Communication is our biggest problem. We don't need team leaders - you could put the trust on the shift. That way, you keep everybody equal. (Barry, Team Leader).

These perceptions were echoed in the survey group's response to the necessity for bureaucratic procedures (q.14). At PopCo, these were interpreted as taking the form of quality standards. Adhering to quality standards had taken on a new meaning recently as quality control had devolved onto the line. Although increased quality was legitimated in its own right (and, indeed, a minority - 33% - believed the bureaucratic procedures were necessary), the right of management to impose quality checks onto the workers' existing task load was not consented to or legitimated (57%).

Up to a point, I've got total control over my job. I run the pelletiser the way I want to run it. When they make changes to things, though, you have less control - like doing the quality. It stinks really. (Doug, Maintainer).

You have to organise more things in a day now with the quality control done on the line. There's a lot of unnecessary doubling-up because you have to put things on the computer and write it out as well. (Brian, Maintainer).

As noted above, the on-line quality control had increased the work effort, an area wherein PopCo respondents did not legitimate or consent to a managerial determination. An overwhelming majority (86%) of the survey group believed workers, not management, should determine a
fair day's work (q.17). John and Theo articulated this perspective and its relationship with the quality control.

I don't mind working harder, but when the line's not running so well you just can't do it. I look after 9 machines and do more checks than the bank would see on a good day! (John, Maintainer).

People running the machines are on quality control as well and these guys are different to the guys who used to run the machines in some cases. And they've taken one guy off and we're all sharing his duties. So it's put an unnecessary pressure on us really. (Theo, Maintainer).

Summary: Granting Consent and Legitimation
PopCo respondents granted their consent and legitimation to management-initiated changes provided they were predicated on a quality imperative, such as increasing PopCo's competitive advantage. There was, however, some residual distrust from workers that management had goals other than these and, where management was seen to be operating from an alternative agenda, the general legitimation and consent was withheld. Local management was seen by the survey group to be constrained in their amount of self-determination; the role of corporate management and the parent company often being seen as considerable. PopCo respondents consented to and legitimated management's need for strong leadership in setting the organisational direction to achieve market share objectives, but withheld that legitimation and consent if the leadership function was used to impose an arbitrary will on the workforce. Generally, though, strong leadership was deemed appropriate in the current operating climate and in meeting external challenges.

Management's role to control within-job performance and effort was not consented to or legitimated by the PopCo survey group. Within the constraints imposed by the production process itself and the perceived need for improved quality in the product, the PopCo respondents expressed a strong desire for control over their within-job performance and effort. Where management sought to impose managerial prerogative through direct supervision or the intensification of work, their prerogative did not receive the consent or legitimation of the survey group.
Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation

This section examines whether workers consent to control generally without legitimating management’s right to control a particular aspect of the labour process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q8. Possible to cover wkr's skipping off.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree %</th>
<th>Agree %</th>
<th>No opinion %</th>
<th>Disagree %</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9. Expectation of control over job.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10. I'm able to determine best way to do my job.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15. Best for me, not mgt to decide how to do my job.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19. Bureaucracy stifles initiative.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation: PopCo Workers. (n=28).

Table 8.4 indicates that the workers in the PopCo survey had an overwhelming expectation of job control (q.9, 89%) which was based on their expertise in the job (q.10, 86%) - making the job incumbent, rather than management, the best person to tailor the job to organisational requirements (q.15, 77%). This supports the trend apparent in the previous section, and extends here to the ability to manipulate time and tasks in order to provide coverage for other workers if they need to be absent (q.8, 71%), though this is no doubt difficult in practice given the lack of spare workers on the production line.

Indeed, management's evaluation of the appropriate manning levels, although consented to in terms of PopCo workers' continuing to work while short-staffed, was not legitimated as necessary in terms of achieving organisational objectives. One of the fitters is on three months' leave in Britain and his job is being covered by the fitters on the other two shifts. Len has not had more than one day off occasionally in
the last two months. There is no slack; no-one to cover holidays and other absences. The existing workforce just has to manage.

There used to be three fitters on shift but now there's only the two. We've got no coverage now and it's a bad decision in that we can't get the maintenance done the same if somebody's off. And if the maintenance isn't kept up to scratch, the machines jam all the time and you can't meet your deadlines. It's false economy to be always cutting down on the manpower. (Len, Tradesperson).

We'd normally run with four down the front end and our shift has been running with three for eighteen months (sometimes, it's even two) - but we shouldn't be running like that. You can't do the job properly. Clearing jam after jam when you're doing twelve hour shifts, it takes a bit out of you and you're bound to drop off in your performance. (Ken, Maintainer).

Although a third of the sample felt that bureaucratic procedures at PopCo stifled initiative (q.19), 52% did not, sometimes indicating that there was actually a reasonable amount of initiative in evading bureaucratic controls in order to "get the job done"!

You haven't got any control over your rate because things come down the line at you and you can back things up if you don't work fast enough. The result of this, of course, is that people cheat on their test procedures so the line still runs. (Doug, Maintainer).

It was possible, for those workers who conscientiously applied themselves to the quality control procedures, to find room to effect their own control over the job even while consenting to the extra constraints which the on-line quality checks imposed on their time. For these respondents, the need for quality checks was consented to and legitimated, but within the quality guidelines they saw a role for their own expertise to be brought to bear on determining how best to adhere to the intention of the quality guidelines. Thus, they did not legitimate management's ability to determine the exact quality standard.

Now that the quality control is on-line, I reckon I've got more control with respect to quality. I've been in this job long enough to be able to perform the quality checks myself. I don't need some specialist manager telling me
how to do 'em or what should be chucked out. (Sean, Maintainer).

I do the quality checks on-line now and that gives me full control over the job. I know what standards the customer requires and it's up to me to put that standard in. (Michael, Maintainer).

One area which was of immense concern to PopCo workers was that of training. Almost all workers consented to the idea that training was necessary for multiskilling to increase competitive advantage, a legitimate objective. However, management's handling of the training issue did not, in the eyes of the PopCo survey group, indicate an appropriate response to that objective. The way in which training had been delayed made many workers suspicious of management's true agenda - and, while consenting to the idea of training and indicating that they would attend courses if and when they eventuated - workers did not legitimate management's motivation in the issue of training. In short, management's seeming reluctance to implement training was viewed as an indication of their general lack of commitment to the quality and productivity objectives they so energetically iterated.

Management need to implement the training - which will create a different atmosphere here; it'll reduce the cynicism. They had a training launch one year ago and another one three years ago too. And there's still no training. You can't break down demarcations and have multiskilling unless people are highly skilled, so you need the training, but they don't put their money where their mouth is. (Paul, Team Leader).

What we get here is talk about training - we don't get no training. We're prepared to go to it and everything. You know, to give it a go. But it's just a verbal commitment with management. (Gary, Maintainer).

The team leaders get training - not us. We get one hour of safety training once every three weeks, and that's just started. Big deal. (John, Operator).

If you get multiskilling you have the opportunity of trying to get people more interested. But you need training for it. They say they want everyone to be more interested, more involved, you know, in the job, but do they provide the training? Nope. (Chris, Team Leader).
Self-teaching is what is really expected here. It's been going on since 1987 and it's supposed to be starting next week. They formed a training committee before the redundancies in 1992 but then they dismissed the training guy! Then they got Lou and he's been studying training but the company won't advance anyone they don't want and they know we like Lou so they won't advance him. (Ernie, Maintainer).

Summary: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation
The majority of PopCo respondents consented to managerial control in determining the broader organisational requirements through their acceptance of the need for quality control. However, this could best be regulated by individual workers, who overwhelmingly expected control over their own job - basing this desire on their perception of superior expertise in the job. This control extended to the ability to manipulate time to their and other workers' advantage. Thus, the survey group did not legitimate a managerial incursion into within-job control. Workers felt they, and not management, had the expertise and superior judgement to fit their job to organisational requirements and, basically, should be left to get on and do just that without interference.

The PopCo survey group also indicated their consent to managerial control in the determination that training was necessary to effect productivity goals. They did not, however, legitimate management's stated agenda in terms of training - believing that management's commitment to training was merely a verbal one.

Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent
These questions examine how workers generally legitimise management's right to control the labour process, but don't consent to all particularities.

Table 8.5 indicates how workers might act to withhold their consent and in what areas such lack of consent might be experienced. It can be seen that a majority of PopCo respondents (57%) were prepared to say that they would support each other if such support was perceived to be necessary (q.29), but if the traditional duties of their group were threatened it was by

181 Lou is one of the Human Resources staff and he has been conducting the safety workshops.
no means certain that PopCo workers would take action to preserve the status quo (q.27, 22%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Q20. Work problems are inevitable.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Q21. Sickies not just for illness.</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q22. I'll bend rules to work more quickly.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q25. I'll work to rule if I'm disgruntled.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26. Do everything I'm told but fed up and would leave if possible.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27. We'd act to preserve our group's functions.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q29. Workers support each other.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q35. Like similar job in another organisation.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q36. Never know what mgt will do next.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.5: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent: PopCo Workers. (n=28).

Question 26 seeks to examine how many workers felt they were doing what was required, but experienced frustration and were only waiting for another job to come up so they could leave. The majority (82%) did not feel this way at PopCo, nor would most people (61%) be prepared to work to rule to express their displeasure (q.25), with a similar majority (68%) not prepared to bend those rules in order to work more quickly (q.22).

Indicating their dissatisfaction about work, but without questioning the legitimacy of the control structures which made them unavoidable, sixty-one percent of the sample felt that problems at work were inevitable
(q.20), and seventy-one percent said that they never knew what management would spring on them next (q.36). Although 39% of respondents did not believe that sickies should be taken for anything other than physical illness, the majority (57%) believed that absences because "work gets too much sometimes" were legitimate. This may reflect both the organisation and intensity of work at PopCo. The twelve-hour shifts on a continuous production line (plus overtime) were burdensome to many workers and "taking a sickie" was an easy alternative to gain some breathing space without actually challenging the arrangements which made this necessary.

At PopCo, the introduction of the teamwork structure provided a good example of how workers might legitimate management control but not consent to particular aspects of that control. The teamwork concept was a managerial initiative introduced by a new Managing Director as an integral part of the package of reforms. Theo didn't mind working in a team, but he's not prepared to acknowledge that what PopCo have introduced is teamwork.

> Whatever they might tell you, this isn't teamwork, because we're not supervised properly for teamwork. The team leader has been appointed by management, which means he's not a team leader, he's some sort of leading hand. I'm for teamwork, but this isn't it. (Theo, Maintainer).

Similarly, Alan thought the concept of teamwork was a legitimate one, but did not consent to management's appointment of team leaders.

> I'm willing to give the team stuff a go, but there's a real problem because the team leaders were put there by management. (Alan, Maintainer).

Doug didn't like the teamwork concept because it interfered with his team's ability to achieve their objectives.

> They've taken two guys off the shop floor to be team leaders and now we're even shorter than before. And we're supposed to think it's a good idea? It's not a bad idea if we had enough guys on the job, but like this it's bloody useless. (Doug, Maintainer).
Part of management's desire with the teamwork concept was to break down the "us and them" barriers which the Managing Director perceived were detrimental to PopCo's performance.\(^{182}\) While legitimating the teamwork concept, Michael did not consent to the need for it to be used to break down traditional barriers which did not impede the production process anyway.

> I can't see why they'd want to change this stuff anyway. It's always worked alright here. There's always going to be "them and us" - I can't see it working any other way. It's fine if you're outside doing a team-building exercise, but it's different back at work. You've got to have a boss. (Michael, Maintainer).

Alan considered there were a number of areas where management was not performing adequately in their attempt to achieve organisational objectives which he considered legitimate. Management strategies were not consented to as a matter of course - they were evaluated on how well they could articulate with legitimate objectives.

> We need a heap of improvement here. We need a framework for the teamwork. It's not working properly now because it's not proper teamwork. So we need to get that sorted out through the Consultative Committee - it needs to be worked on together. And we need to get some training happening. And they need better lines of communication within management. You can look from the bottom up and see problems all along the way. (Alan, Maintainer).

The hierarchical lines of communication within management were experiencing some difficulties which Barry attributed to the insecurity of the shift superintendent's position. With the rumoured changes to the supervisory structure, Barry perceived his shift superintendent as reluctant to make decisions. In the interests of facilitating the attainment of organisational objectives, Barry bypassed the designated chain of command.

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\(^{182}\) This information was supplied by the Technical Services Manager, who considered that the barriers were not as great as the Managing Director supposed. PopCo has been unusual in the cooperation between the workforce and management in reaching productivity targets. The Technical Services Manager maintained that the production line had always been run by management when workers had a stop-work meeting, for example. This surprising information was confirmed by both the convenor and the shop steward.
I bypass the shift super now. I'd rather go to [the Technical Services Manager] or an engineer. If there's a problem on the line, I want it fixed. I want to have a decision made on it. I can't hang around waiting for [the shift superintendent] to figure out what's the best decision to make for his job prospects. (Barry, Team Leader).

PopCo workers, although legitimating management's productivity objectives, did not consent to unilateral decision-making by management. The consultative committee provided one avenue whereby they could express their opinion and the mass meeting was another. Consent to particular managerial initiatives was often withheld at these meetings, and more amenable solutions (which the workforce believed would have similar outcomes for management, but less adverse impact on workers) were proposed.

The consultative committee is set up to thrash out any problems with management before things get implemented. They get what they want and we make sure it doesn't hurt us too much. (Peter, Maintainer).

The workforce have controlled, by their voices, how a lot of things have ended up being done. (Darryl, Team Leader).

Management send down the proposals and we respond to them through the consultative committee or through our mass meetings and you'd have to say we have the final word on how to do it. (Graham, Maintainer).

In legitimating the organisational objectives and wanting to look for ways to improve productivity, some PopCo workers had provided management with their suggestions as to how the production process could be refined. Lack of feedback or recognition from management, though, had caused their consent to this practice to be withdrawn.

Sometimes you make suggestions that are ignored totally, even though you're trying to do the right thing by them and it's what they want us to do. So some blokes don't even try now. (Peter, Maintainer).

Some of my suggestions were implemented without any recognition. Not any more, I'll keep my ideas to myself.
from now on. There's lots of little things I can just do without telling anyone. (Michael, Maintainer).

We used to almost have fights about it if they refused to implement our ideas, but it's just not worth it. You don't get emotionally involved any more. (Paul, Team Leader).

In performing their own job in their own way, workers were legitimating the organisational objectives, but not consenting to management's instructions as to how the job should most properly be performed.

You figure out over time which things work better with the machines. People have different ways of doing things. (Ken, Maintainer).

There are three shifts competing with each other for productivity and they won't stick to any standardised ways of doing things across the three shifts. (Simon, Maintainer).

Every shift tradesman has his own routines to get the work done. (Jason, Tradesperson).

Summary: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent
The survey group generally legitimated the objectives of the work process changes at PopCo but did not consent to management strategies as a matter of course. Rather, those strategies were evaluated by the workforce to ascertain their ability to enhance organisational performance. Further, the consultative committee was used to express a lack of workforce consent to particular management strategies, while still granting legitimacy to the organisation's objectives.

Withholding Consent and Legitimation
This section examines the boundary that exists beyond which workers will not tolerate any incursion of management control, neither consenting to nor legitimising management interference in what workers perceive to be their sphere of control over their own labour process.

As shown in Table 8.6 the overwhelming majority (85%) of workers in the survey group would not like a similar job in another organisation. The wages at PopCo are well above the average for the type of work
performed and, even if high earnings are attributed to overtime and the length of shifts, the capacity to earn at PopCo is reflected in this response. It does not mean that workers might not prefer another type of work, merely that, if they have to work on a production line, they're happier to do so at PopCo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q7. I can avoid new methods if I don't want to do them.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23. I'll avoid new ways if they make work harder.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24. More worker participation in change is needed here.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28. I avoid doing things if they make work more difficult.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30. Mgt need to recall that I'm an individual. General rules won't always apply.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q31. I try to interpret rules in the best way for my job.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q33. I know what a fair day's work is and I should determine it.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q34. If the rules go against them, I'll stick to the ways I know.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.6: Withholding Consent and Legitimation: PopCo Workers. (n=28).

It is also apparent that the majority (68%) of PopCo respondents see themselves as individuals to whom general rules may not always apply and think management should take that notion on board (q.30). This finds expression in the desire of 75% of the survey group to interpret rules in a manner which is most appropriate to their own job.
requirements (q.31), and to yet another expression of the perceived right of workers to determine a fair day's work (q.33) - again a large majority view (79%). This is supported by an overwhelming ninety-seven percent of respondents perceiving that more worker participation in change is necessary at PopCo, with over a third of respondents strongly agreeing that this was appropriate (q.24).

There has to be more management - shopfloor consultation. In the 1990's, you've got to have consultation. (Warren, Maintainer).

Warren has indicated that unilateral decision-making by management may be becoming less acceptable to the workforce in terms of their basic expectations. It would seem that, although legitimating management's right to direct the big picture, respondents were not prepared to legitimate an arbitrary imposition of managerial will on the workforce. As Warren said, in the 1990's, legitimate exercise of managerial prerogative will not include by-passing consultation. That the workforce desires to be consulted, though, may rest less on perceived citizenship rights than on their ability to effectively contribute to organisational objectives.

We don't have the technical staff or the facilities to fix things our way. We need more support because it's only the operator who really knows the little things that upset the machines. (Neil, Operator).

The survey group were evenly divided as to whether they would generally avoid management initiatives which made their work more difficult and for which they could see no good reason (q.28). Comments from some respondents suggested that workers at PopCo might withdraw their consent and legitimation from management strategies as a result of being exposed to changes which they associated more with management's desired political, rather than productivity, outcomes.

My attitude is worse because of the politics. These shift changes are a fucking pain. You're living you life around the company. (Sean, Maintainer).

My attitude has gone downhill. I used to care but now I do as little as possible. I'm more cynical, I suppose, because they live in the old style of management where they have the theories of divide and conquer - though
they would have you believe otherwise. (John, Maintainer).

Compliance with management's intitiatives even when no good reason could be ascertained for them appeared to be associated, also, with general notions of legitimacy about management's right to direct certain activities.

You might be going along doing something one way until someone who's read something in a book tells you he wants it done this way. Well, that's what I'm paid for I suppose. (Vic, Maintainer).

I've got a few safety concerns about the rate we're working at now with all these extra checks and tests on the line, but you've got no choice. (Brian, Maintainer).

Things are more rushed here now - which is a safety issue for us. They're always experimenting here with new ways to cut down on the amount of materials we need to make the finished product. I suppose they have to do that, but it does means they're always fiddling with things and we just have to sort of adapt to it. (Ernie, Maintainer).

One of the outcomes of the teamwork structure was that team leaders earned more than their colleagues, alongside whom they worked on every shift. There was a widespread sense that this was unequal treatment from the other maintainers, possibly because no-one had had the opportunity to apply for the job themselves, as Warren suggested.

There's a lot of inequalities here. The team leader's getting $100 a week more than me. I'll keep my ideas to myself, thankyou very much, until things settle down and we know where we're heading. (Warren, Maintainer).

Not allowing people to apply for the job of team leader seemed to suggest to some workers that the good efforts of only a select few of the workforce had been noted by management. This lack of recognition could result in workers withholding consent and legitimation by actually withdrawing that effort, as Simon indicated.
My attitude is getting slowly worse because it doesn't seem to matter how conscientious you are. And the extra effort? No-one cares anyway. Attitudes need to change so that everyone does the same amount of work. (Simon, Maintainer).

It wasn't only lack of recognition for effort that could cause a PopCo worker to withdraw his cooperation. Ernie indicated how a lack of complementary management effort could effect this result.

My attitude varies, but it'd be safe to say I felt disheartened and tired. Management weren't responding to safety issues so I dropped out of the safety committee. (Ernie, Maintainer).

There has been no emphasis on training here and this has been a big downfall to people's morale and the concept of teamwork. (Darryl, Team Leader).

A number of workers reported that morale was important at PopCo. Working twelve-hour shifts plus overtime, low morale could influence the cooperation which management received from workers.

I've noticed that our relationship with management has been less cooperative over the last few months. This place does run on morale and it's pretty low at the moment. I don't remember what the issue was that started it. (Barry, Team Leader).

You know what I hate from them? It's being treated like an idiot. (Vic, Maintainer).

It depends on whether there's enough staff, whether we can get things fixed, whether there're rumours going around. All those sort of things influences the morale, and how much gets done as a result. (Paul, Team Leader).

There's a lot of dead wood here, but management cause a lot of it with the way people get treated. (Neil, Maintainer).

In summary, then PopCo respondents withheld their consent and legitimation from management initiatives by interpreting rules in the manner most favourable to their job requirements and by their strongly-held desire to participate in change. This was complemented by their
belief that workers and not management should determine effort and, if that effort was not recognised or worker input not supported by management action, legitimation and consent would be withheld.

Extent of Compliance - Implementing the Changes
Table 8.6 shows that there was a complex response from the PopCo workforce to the matter of the implementation of changes. Question 7 indicates that the survey group were fairly evenly split on whether new work methods could be avoided if workers didn't want to implement them, with a slight majority (50%) reporting that they could be avoided, and 43% denying this ability. Just because workers feel they can avoid new work methods, it does not necessarily follow that they will, and the data in Table 8.6 seems to support this conclusion. That they were not universally recalcitrant is evident in that a majority of respondents would implement changes even if they conflicted with traditional ways of doing the job (q.34, 83%) or made work harder (q.23, 61%). Although Gary, for example, thought many of the changes were neither desirable nor appropriate, the fact that they made his work harder was not really an issue. Indeed, he was beginning to see some benefits in the changes that had been made.

I don't mind working harder. It's so boring here - I'd do anything to break the boredom. I'd have to admit that I'm more conscientious now, mainly because I can see that we might be able to achieve something. (Gary, Maintainer).

Paul, in his new role as team leader, had found some satisfaction from his increased spread of responsibility.

The days certainly go by quicker now. And I know more about making the product now. (Paul, Team Leader).

Rodney, too, preferred what he saw as a greater challenge.

I'm going around to different areas now, learning to run all the machines in the place. It's much better for me. (Rodney, Maintainer).

Brian indicated that changing with the times was a challenge in itself, a challenge that he wanted to be able to meet.
I'm trying to go with the flow and adapt to the new ways. I don't want to be ignorant of anything - I want to have had a go. (Brian, Maintainer).

Summary: Withholding Consent and Legitimation
Although they could avoid doing so, the majority of PopCo respondents were prepared to implement managerial initiatives - even if they made worker harder or went against traditional ways of performing the job. The survey group, though, indicated that they were inclined to withhold their consent and legitimation from management if management sought to impose an arbitrary will or what the respondents perceived to be political, rather than productivity, objectives on the workforce. Recognition of effort appeared important in withholding consent to and legitimation of management initiatives in two ways: firstly, management needed to recognise worker effort and, secondly, make their own exertions in response to workforce efforts. Perceived inequality of treatment, in terms of opportunities and rewards, also appeared to affect this process - all of which could be deemed to have an adverse impact on workforce morale which, in its turn, contributed to the workers withholding legitimation and consent.

WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES OF CHANGE AT POPCO

Almost all PopCo workers legitimated management's right to initiate organisational change in the interest of gaining and maintaining competitive advantage. Yet PopCo workers did not always perceive themselves as working in concert with management. It has been shown that the reform strategies were generally deemed to be appropriate. The withdrawal of consent and legitimation which was generally accorded to management initiatives appeared to arise from management's perceived arbitrariness and opportunism.

Despite the fact that their experience of work was circumscribed by a continous-feed production line, there existed among workers a widely-held desire to control aspects of the labour process which would be likely
to mitigate management's control in certain areas - particularly with respect to within-job expertise and work effort. As was seen in Table 8.6, though, workers generally believed that they would implement the changes management desired, provided those changes were consistent with the attainment of competitive advantage. It is to an indication of how workers understood the imperatives which the reform strategies sought to address that consideration now turns.

The introduction to this chapter explained management's perceived imperatives for the PopCo reforms - the need to regain some loss of competitive advantage. Management's particular targets for improvement were the cost, quality and reliability of supply of the product. Labour productivity and flexibility were to be increased via the removal of demarcations and the introduction of teamwork and an accompanying job rotation. PopCo management were also under pressure from the parent company to be competitive in the export marketplace, so the success of these initiatives in the local market (where PopCo had a monopoly of supply) was not sufficient to satisfy corporate objectives. As has been seen in the preceding pages, the PopCo survey group legitimated these objectives and had some awareness of the constraints under which local management operated. Their perceptions of the changes in terms of the imperatives, process and outcomes form the subject of the following discussion.

**Workers' Perceptions Of The Change Imperatives**

Table 8.8 indicates that PopCo respondents understood the change imperatives in terms of the need for greater efficiency or cost-cutting, or both. Of course, efficiency means "doing more with less" so there is an implied reduction of resources in the term.

In the minds of workers, though, the cost-cutting implied in the definition of efficiency is quite legitimate, and is different to cost-cutting which is believed to reflect management's desire to limit expenditure in the interests of reducing costs (particularly labour costs) in order to increase profit. Efficiency seems to refer to achieving more in terms of
the relative expenditure expressed as a proportion of increased flexibility, output, better organisation of work, and so on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY WERE THESE CHANGES MADE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency and cost-cutting</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-cutting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 28 Cases</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.8: PopCo Workers' Perceptions of the Imperatives for Change.

Peter, Warren and Vic articulated the majority view - that the reforms were due to management's desire to both increase efficiency and cut costs.

_They wanted to be more efficient with using what they had better and they also wanted to cut their costs. But you shouldn't forget that they were wanting to go for this down-manning._ (Peter, Maintainer).

_There were too many people when the new line came on because then production became more efficient. Also, we got a new manager who said you can run the line with less people. Which is fair enough. That's business, I suppose._ (Warren, Maintainer).

_We were overproducing before. But they've saved a lot of money on wages by cutting back like they did._ (Vic, Maintainer).

The overproduction to which Vic referred was a problem for the company two years' prior to this study. Due to an unanticipated slump in consumer demand in the local market, which was retrospectively attributed to the recession, the company's production exceeded its ability to sell the product. Its response was to offer voluntary redundancies and drop one shift. Since then, production has picked up as the export market has been exploited and the new production line was installed. The redundancies and subsequent long shifts with overtime have caused some bewilderment and resentment among the survey group.
We got up their productivity - filled the warehouse for them - and then they went and did it [made a shift redundant] because they said we were overproducing and they couldn’t sell it all. (Darryl, Team Leader).

They couldn’t store the excess stock we were turning out, so they wanted to cut back on production. But they also wanted to get rid of the dead wood and save money. But now, we can’t make enough! (Graham, Maintainer).

John and Jason were resigned to what they saw as the efficiency imperative.

I suspect they are always off on the quest for efficiency. (John, Maintainer).

It was a world-wide trend. Less people, more machinery. The global economy and all that crap. (Jason, Fitter).

Workers could attribute different motives to similar management actions. Chris, Paul and Adrian (all team leaders) considered management had taken a rational course of action in reducing manning levels.

We lost one shift because supply exceeded demand and we didn’t need the extra workers. (Chris, Team Leader).

There’s one less fitter per shift now, which is okay because we were excess to requirements before. (Paul, Team Leader).

They just wanted to run a bit leaner on the line. (Adrian, Team Leader).

These views were supported by Len, Peter and Mark.

They’ve not been re-employing when they finish chaps off because they’ve been trying to get their staffing levels right. (Len, Fitter).

We lost a shift because we could meet production targets by working three shifts on 5-day rosters. (Peter, Maintainer).

We lost a shift because of the second line - which means we can make enough with less men. (Mark, Maintainer).
Ken, Doug and Ernie, however, imputed a more self-serving motive to management's actions.

The way they approach cost-saving here is to be always on the lookout to try and get their savings out of the wages instead of looking to reduce the cost of things like power or materials. (Ken, Maintainer).

We lost a shift plus at least two members of the remaining shifts because the company thought we could do the work with less men. They were trying to save a big heap of dollars. (Doug, Maintainer).

The company was trying to cut its labour costs by cutting down on manning levels. Pure and simple, as they say on the ad. (Ernie, Maintainer).183

These views were supported by Brian, who felt this was an expected response by PopCo management, and Michael, who referred back to the efficiency imperative.

The company always wants to drop the manning levels. (Brian, Maintainer).

They aimed at cutting their costs to increase their profit margins. Their ideal is to have the least amount of highly skilled men. (Michael, Maintainer).

Neil felt that management had started off with reasonable motives, but had been opportunistic in its longer-term decisions about manning levels.

Their idea originally was to downgrade production. But now we're busy they don't want to run four shifts. You work it out. (Neil, Maintainer).

Summary: The Change Imperatives
PopCo respondents perceived management to have initiated the reforms in response to two major imperatives - efficiency and cost-cutting. Although efficiency motives were accorded some legitimacy as being a response to circumstances over which management had little control, the cost-cutting imperative appeared to be viewed as a deliberate management strategy aimed at reducing the labour cost.

183 Pure and Simple is a widely-advertised baking product.
The Process Of Change

The PopCo survey group's satisfaction with the process of change was examined by inquiring into
- who workers perceived to be responsible for the changes;
- the enterprise bargaining process;
- how disruptive workers found the changes; and
- whether they had input into the changes.

The Responsibility for Change

Although unions, the government, the workforce and management were all mentioned as responsible, the majority of respondents attributed the responsibility for the reforms to management (Table 8.9, 79%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHANGES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 28 cases.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.9: PopCo Workers' Perceptions of Responsibility for Change.

Barry was more particular in his identification of the source of most organisational change which was intitated by management:

*I think the accountants are the ones who drive most of these types of changes these days.* (Barry, Team Leader).

Management could also be seen as responding to customer demand.

*The customer's the one who's driven these changes.* (Gary, Maintainer).
The CEO, too, was instrumental in initiating the reforms, according to some workers.

The boss here has dictated things the way he wants it to go. (Phil, Maintainer).

[The CEO] has brought about the concept of a philosophical direction. (Adrian, Team Leader).

Corporate management, too, were attributed responsibility for the changes in their subsidiary plant.

It’s the hierarchy of eastern states management that have engineered the changes here. (Jason, Fitter).

Management’s responsibility for the changes was complete to some workers who found aspects of the changes undesirable.

Management’s instigated most of the changes here so it’s as if most of them have really been forced on us. (Doug, Maintainer).

Management are the only ones who will allow change - we’ve pushed for various changes but they’re not allowed to happen. (John, Maintainer).

Sean, though, felt management’s initiatives could be complemented by workforce cooperation and Mark thought the unions, too, had played a role.

Initially the drive comes from upstairs, but if you like your job enough you’ll get in and pull your weight too. (Sean, Maintainer).

The unions have been pushing for a bigger say and more responsibility. (Mark, Maintainer).

The Enterprise Bargaining Process

One way in which the union\(^{184}\) did play a role in the reforms at PopCo was in the enterprise bargaining process which formalised many of the changes in an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA). A majority of

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\(^{184}\) The Metals and Engineering Workers’ Union (WA Branch) and the Australian Electrical, Electronics, Foundry and Engineering Union (WA Branch) were the two unions party to the EBA.
respondents (Table 8.10, 59%) considered they knew what was happening during the enterprise bargaining process, which was negotiated through the on-site consultative committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DID YOU KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING DURING THE PROCESS OF ENTERPRISE BARGAINING?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wasn't interested</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 26 cases.

Table 8.10: PopCo Workers' Knowledge of the Progress of Enterprise Bargaining Negotiations.

A large minority (39%), though, disclaimed such knowledge. Chris felt the information which was disclosed was limited.

*All we got to know was what they wanted us to know.*

(Chris, Team Leader)

Brian had trouble taking in the amount and type of information associated with the enterprise bargaining process.

*I don’t absorb information very well, and there was a lot of it.*

(Brian, Maintainer)

Paul and Darryl, too, found the bulk of information disconcerting and the unreliability of the sources problematic.

*There was so much information and the meetings went on so long that without being directly involved, you couldn’t take it all in. There was a fair bit of confusion between management, the union and the shopfloor about what flexibility actually means. The trouble with the union and workplace change is that you never know if they’re telling you all you really need to know to make a decision.*

(Paul, Team Leader)

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185 Team Leaders, at the time of the enterprise bargaining, were 'ordinary' shopfloor workers.
I didn’t really know who to believe – the union and management both don’t really tell the truth. You had to try and work it out for yourself. (Darryl, Team Leader).

Michael’s lack of interest in the EBA stemmed from an ideological basis.

I’m totally philosophically opposed to these EBA’s. (Michael, Maintainer).

The majority of respondents (Table 8.11, 87%) knew someone who was involved in the negotiations and half the sample (Table 8.12) considered the job delegate the best source of information about the progress of enterprise bargaining.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DID YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE ENTERPRISE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 23 cases.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.11 PopCo Workers’ Knowledge of the Negotiators in Enterprise Bargaining.

Indeed, including those who were personally involved in the negotiations, the union or shopfloor accounted for 95% of the source of information about the EBA. Theo found management’s pamphlet helpful, but Phil obtained most information from chatting with other workers.

The pamphlet given to us by management told us everything we needed to know. It was good. (Theo, Maintainer).

Things tend to filter through around here. During the EBA we generally got to hear what was on the drawing board. (Phil, Maintainer).
WHO WAS YOUR BEST SOURCE OF INFORMATION DURING THE PROCESS OF ENTERPRISE BARGAINING?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job delegate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The union</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was involved</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapevine</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 20 cases.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.12: PopCo Workers' Best Source of Information about the Progress of Enterprise Bargaining Negotiations.

Vic covered all angles, but soliciting information from both management and the union.

*I'd speak to the Convenor and to management as well. To get the full picture.* (Vic, Maintainer).

A large majority of PopCo respondents reported that they had received reasonable notification of the changes (Table 8.13, 70%), with a further 4 workers (15%) indicating that they were usually notified in advance of changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DID YOU RECEIVE A REASONABLE NOTIFICATION OF THE PENDING CHANGES?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 27 cases.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.13: PopCo Workers' Perceptions of Notification of Change.

Indeed, as Jason noted, there was a formal requirement for management adhere to this practice.
Under the Award, they have to give us two weeks' notice of any changes. (Jason, Fitter).

Notwithstanding the positive response about notification, there was some degree of cynicism about the quality of information which constituted notification. Peter saw organisational change as management's response to external conditions and explained the notification of the response within that context.

I heard about the changes on the grapevine. Everything here is dictated by the market. And the market is always changing. So there are always rumours about shift changes, cause shift changes are their usual response to market changes. (Peter, Maintainer).

Doug felt that notification of changes was not something to which management were committed.

Things tend to just arrive. We suddenly one day had no Quality Control Officer and it became my job and the job of two others. So being on the consultative committee means nothing in terms of notification. (Doug, Maintainer).

Many workers believed management manipulated information and the way in which workers were notified.

Management only tell you about things when they're ready, but rumours always precede them. They have meetings and that but then they don't necessarily tell you the truth at the meetings. (Warren, Maintainer).

It's a bit ad hoc, the way information is distributed here. They talk about stuff and then they come up with another angle. (Alan, Maintainer).

You get reasonable notification when it suits management to give it. They use the grapevine to good advantage - they'll drop a few bad suggestions around and then it turns out to be something else which is "not so bad". (Darryl, Team Leader).

Theo's observation suggests there is some mutual game-playing occurring by both management and workers.
Sometimes the communication here is appalling - but it's still not bad compared to some other places I've been. I think that you should have to initial any notices to say that you've read it. Then they can't say we all knew when we didn't. And we can't say we didn't know when we did. (Theo, Maintainer).

Notification of changes implies that the details of the change can be communicated in some way. One of the reforms which had been implemented was the removal of a hand-over period between shifts. This made the communication of minor changes problematic.

The little things aren't communicated about. It's left to one person who doesn't pass the information around the shifts. (Neil, Maintainer).

The decrease in labour had also contributed to communication difficulties according to some workers.

The communication's bad here. We're that busy running around now that it's hard to pass things on, even to guys on the other end. I never know what the front end's up to. (Rodney, Maintainer).

We've got problems here with communication between shifts and between the front and back end. No-one ever knows what anyone else is doing, so I suppose that goes against us in some ways. (Simon, Maintainer).

Michael and Ken found a lack of communication with technical staff compromised their ability to gain a better understanding of the job. This difficulty again raised the issue of training. As the men indicated, the communication was vital if the worker wasn't trained well enough to problem-solve.

Not having the training in it, you've got no understanding of why some tasks are required. And they can't be bothered to tell you when you ask 'em. (Michael, Maintainer).

The technical staff in this place don't tell you anything. That makes the need for our own training that much more important. We need to know how our machines operate. That'll make it easier to troubleshoot. (Ken, Maintainer).
In summary, then, PopCo respondents could be considered to have thought themselves reasonably well-informed about the enterprise bargaining process and reasonably well-notified about pending changes. However, they often felt that the nature of the reforms had compromised the dissemination of this information, and were aware that such information as was conveyed to them was often intended to manipulate their response.

**The Change Process and Worker and Job Disruption**

Apart from the stopwork meetings associated with the redundancies in 1992, there had been no industrial disputation accompanying the reforms at PopCo. In fact, a majority of respondents did not even report the reforms as disruptive, though a large minority had found the changes disruptive in some way - either to their job performance or to their personal lives (Table 8.14).

Most of the personal disruption was associated with shift changes or the length of shifts. Shift patterns and changes to those patterns were disruptive in the following ways.

*The changes in shift patterns can be a bit disruptive on the home front and with sleeping and that.* (Adrian, Team Leader).

*The shift patterns and changes do affect your family life, no doubt about it.* (Darryl, Team Leader).

*The shift patterns disrupt weekends particularly.* (Warren, Maintainer).

*With the changes of shift, it’s hard to book holidays or go to TAFE or things like that.* (Theo, Maintainer).

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186 TAFE - Technical and Further Education. When the training scheme is implemented, attendance at TAFE is going to be problematic for shiftworkers at PopCo. Warren's comment, though, referred not to this training, but to his desire to gain a certificate in computer studies and then take his education further. For him, as for many other workers at PopCo, there was a real trade-off between earning good wages (and, thus, their ability to be full participants in the consumer society - paying off the mortgage, having holidays, owning boats, videos, etc - and assuring some comfort in their old age by building up their assets in their middle years) and having a different type of quality of life.
Table 8.14: The Extent of Disruption PopCo Workers Experienced as a Result of Organisational Change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF DISRUPTION EXPERIENCED</th>
<th>PERSONAL DISRUPTION CAUSED BY CHANGES</th>
<th>DISRUPTION TO YOUR ABILITY TO PERFORM YOUR JOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of workers</td>
<td>% of sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not disruptive</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little disruptive</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Disruptive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = cases.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sean and Rodney represented the view that the hours of work were too long at PopCo.

I seem to spend more time here than at home. (Sean, Maintainer).

I've got a lot less time to go out now. (Rodney, Maintainer).

The job had started to encroach on workers' expectations of their home life and this was considered to be both detrimental and disruptive. Alan's source of disruption, though, derived from his efforts in trying to minimise the adverse effects of reform.

I've spent a fair bit of time after hours going through the controversial stuff with the union. (Alan, Maintainer and Convenor).

The majority (54%) view, however, was that the changes hadn't been disruptive and Barry's comment illustrates this perspective.

I'm all for the changes if having the reforms increases our job security and our security in the market. (Barry, Team Leader).
Table 8.14 also showed that the respondents' ability to perform their jobs was not disrupted by the changes in the majority (60%) of cases. Doug, though, found the extra workload had an effect which he found very disruptive.

*I've got to cheat to do my job now sometimes because I can't keep up with all the quality checks. And I don't like that.* (Doug, Maintainer).

Doug was not alone in cheating on his quality checks - the maintainers commonly expressed the view that cheating occurred. Gary's comment was illustrative.

*Everyone does it sometimes. You get to know what the reading's should be and you just fill it in if you're flat out.* (Gary, Maintainer).

Vic felt his productivity had fallen because of the longer shifts and the increase in tasks.

*You get a bit tireder and you just simply can't do as much.* (Vic, Maintainer).

Warren's perceptions of pay inequities had an adverse effect on his work performance.

*I find I am disrupted in the performance of my job with respect to the inequalities of the wages here, with the team leaders doing the same as us and getting $100 a week more for it.* (Warren, Maintainer).

Simon, though, was resigned to the disruptions he'd experienced.

*There are disruptions to your work when you have changes. But you have to accept them and settle into a new pattern.* (Simon, Maintainer).

**Influencing Change**

PopCo respondents overwhelmingly perceived they were usually able to have input into changes (Table 8.15) and that input was generally perceived to be of a collective nature (Table 8.16).
DO YOU FEEL YOU WERE ABLE TO HAVE ANY INPUT INTO THOSE CHANGES?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input Level</th>
<th>Number of Workers</th>
<th>% of Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 28 cases.

Table 8.15: PopCo Workers' Perceptions of their Input into Change.

WHAT TYPE OF INPUT WERE YOU ABLE TO HAVE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input Type</th>
<th>Number of Workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote at meetings</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through the consultative committee</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak at meetings</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak with management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was on the negotiating committee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample = 25 cases.

Table 8.16: PopCo Workers' Perceptions of their Type of Input.

There were constraints on the type of issues about which worker input was possible, though.

You’re able to have input through the consultative committee with minor things. But as to line design and how it’s programmed - no, we’ve got no control over any changes they make there. (Phil, Maintainer).

You’re able to talk to people and make suggestions to the consultative committee, that sort of thing. It depends on the type of change. By the way, the consultative committee don’t get paid for it. They have to come in after work; and we work 12 hour shifts, remember. (Gary, Maintainer).
Andrew found input through mass meetings a bit of a challenge, but the outcomes were generally favourable.

You can speak at meetings, but it’s really a matter of shouting a bit louder than anyone else! I’d say that 95% of the time I’d get my idea implemented. (Alan, Maintainer).

Part of the reform process included the establishment of a Corrective Action Team. Ken explained how selected workers could have an input into improving output through that team.

I’m part of the Corrective Action Team (me, an engineer, the Technical Services Manager and a management consultant as a facilitator). We had to clean the front end up; cut costs. The joint was pretty messy but we’re starting to get on top of it. We come up with ideas to overcome problems and engineering solutions evolve. For example, we use 50,000 litres a week more coolant than any other plant and a lot goes down the vacuum hoses, so we suggested putting in a tilter to empty the coolant out while [the product’s] on the unloader so the coolant stays in the machine and doesn’t go to the trimmer where it gets sucked up by the vacuum. (Ken, Maintainer).

Alan, although participating in change through the mass meeting, felt a lot of proposed changes didn’t come to the workers for their prior approval.

We’ll only get input if we know the changes are on. They’re usually just discussed with supervisors and team leaders. (Alan, Maintainer).

Ken’s comment summarised the process of change as perceived by many PopCo respondents.

We’ve put the changes into place at the shopfloor level. We have our mass meetings and get together and discuss the good and the bad and then vote on it. But they could lift their game in the consultation area. It depends on how you get on with people. There’s a lot of times when you have to get on to them to see what’s happening. Not a lot is volunteered about what they really want to do. (Ken, Maintainer).
Summary: The Process of Change
The majority of PopCo workers considered themselves reasonably well-informed about the progress of enterprise bargaining and proposals for change at PopCo; for the initiation of which management were generally held responsible. Workers were seen to be able to influence changes through their collective voice. Most respondents had not been overly disrupted, either personally or in the performance of their jobs, by the reforms. There was, however, some residual cynicism that management manipulated the delivery of information about potential changes and that workers had to use considerable personal discretion to sort "the wheat from the chaff" in both management and union communications. Communication itself was compromised by some of the reforms - such as the removal of a handover period - and the reluctance of some technical staff to pass on information which would increase the workers' understanding of their jobs.

Workers' Perceptions Of The Outcomes Of Change At Popco

Job Security
PopCo workers earlier reported that they did not wish to leave that company to seek similar work with another employer. They considered their wages well above average for the manufacturing industry in Perth - so good, in fact, that many maintainers eschewed their trade in favour of the PopCo production line. Respondents were thus interested in the maintenance of this income, so job security was important to them. Table 8.17 shows that most respondents felt secure in their job at PopCo, and Table 8.18 indicates the source of that job security.

In a majority of cases, this security was related either to the company's monopoly in the local marketplace or to its improving fortunes.

This is a large company and it's got a big name and with us being the only one it looks okay to me. The market will increase, not go down. (Ken, Maintainer).

This is a solid company - as long as we can keep the production going, we'll be alright. (Barry, Team Leader).
HOW SECURE DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR JOB?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very secure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't care</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 28 cases.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.17: PopCo Workers' Perceptions of Job Security.

WHY DO YOU FEEL SECURE IN YOUR JOB?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company's product monopoly</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm good at my job</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company's performance improving</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't care about security</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union protection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 21 cases.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.18: PopCo Workers' Reasons for Job Security.

The push to lean production could increase the job security of those who survived the restructure.

"The workforce is at its bare minimum now so it can't go any lower, so my job should be safe. And we've got the monopoly and this is a selling product, so the company should be okay." (Warren, Maintainer).

Adrian felt confident in the company's ability to achieve its goals in the marketplace.
The changes we're making will work and that will lead to a competitive and efficient enterprise. (Adrian, Team Leader).

Performing adequately in the job was also perceived to supply some measure of job security.

I'm relatively good at my job, I reckon. I've never given them any cause for complaint. And it's a good solid company so I'd say the future was pretty secure for me here. (Phil, Maintainer).

[PopCo] will look after you reasonably well if you do your job. (Sean, Maintainer).

I feel secure in my job because I do it, not like some people I could name. (Chris, Team Leader).

Neil, though, believed it was the union's rules which afforded the greatest job security, though the tone of his comment suggested he found that circumstance unpalatable.

It's the union who says who stays and who goes here - it's not how bad or good you are. (Neil, Maintainer).

John has squirreled away money from his overtime and shift earnings and built up his asset base. He was one of two workers for whom job security was not an issue.

I don't care about job security because I've got plenty stashed away and, besides, I've got outside interests. (John, Maintainer).

Perceptions of job security could also change in response to information he received about the marketplace, which could be disconcerting.

My job security fluctuates - it depends on how much talk there is about cutbacks and redundancies. (Brian, Maintainer).

The five workers in the sample who did not feel secure in their jobs echoed Brian's concerns (Table 8.19).
WHY DO YOU EXPERIENCE JOB INSECURITY?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed reductions in manning levels</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insecurity of industry</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed changes to supervisory structure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 5 cases.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.19: PopCo Workers' Reasons for Job Insecurity.

Doug and Wayne indicated how proposed or rumoured changes to manning levels could upset a worker's sense of job security.

The employer is always talking about reducing manning levels. (Doug, Maintainer).

There are changes to the supervisory structure coming up and I don't know what they'll entail or what it'll mean for me. But they have to come; we're just too top heavy with the teams. (Wayne, Shift Superintendent).

Jason was even more pessimistic. He felt job insecurity was part of the contemporary employment scenario.

Trusting your employer to do the right thing by you is a thing of the past these days. (Jason, Fitter).

What's on Offer at PopCo

Table 8.20 shows that only a minority of PopCo respondents considered the reforms had offered them more opportunities. Over a third of the survey group either felt they had nothing to gain from the reforms or that there was less on offer now than prior to the changes.

Part of this perception seemed to arise from the cynicism which some respondents had experienced about management's desire to fulfill promises or achieve stated aims.

I don't know what they may or may not talk about, but I don't think that any of it will come true. (John, Maintainer).
### Table 8.20: PopCo Workers' Evaluation of what the Reforms have to Offer Them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE OFFERED BY THE REFORMS?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future with more skills</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than before</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better use of existing skills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 27 cases.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was also a perception that continuous improvement in production methods could only eventuate in undesirable outcomes for workers. This worried some workers more than others. Paul and Adrian provided viewpoints on this issue.

> I guess the trick nowadays is to work smarter maybe, not harder. On the downside, though, the smarter we get, the more chance there is of job losses. (Paul, Team Leader).

> The hard point is that the more efficient we become, the less people will be employed here. But that's the way we have to go for the benefit of the rest of us. (Adrian, Team Leader).

The multiskilling which a third of the survey group identified as a positive outcome from the reforms was not always viewed favourable, especially by the highly skilled.

> They're trying to deskill us by broadening our duties, which are becoming lower skilled as a result. (Jason, Fitter).

To the "unskilled" worker like Ken, though, the future looked brighter with skill acquisition.
I can go to the Fitter stage with the new training opportunities in the EBA. I'm paid as a C-12 but I'm not really at that level. I have to back-train to get that competency level and then I can go forward from there. (Ken, Maintainer).

Even Ernie, who was really feeling the adverse effects of the shiftwork, was prepared to concede that he might be able to use his existing skills as a result of the removal of demarcations and the job rotation associated with the teamwork concept. And Doug, who had many reservations about the changes overall, concurred.

I can’t accept the nightshifts any more - I’m going to leave. If I stay, though, it’ll eventually give me more knowledge in skills I already have if the training comes off. (Ernie, Maintainer).

I’ll say this much - maybe in time we’ll be able to actually use our existing skills in this job. (Doug, Maintainer).

Mark hoped that the increased working hours associated with the reduction in manning levels would contribute to his earlier exit from the labour force at PopCo!

I anticipate that I’ll be able to take early retirement now that I’ve been earning so much in the last couple of years. (Mark, Maintainer).

The job of maintainer was also seen to constrain expectations of the reforms.

I don’t think the reforms have offered much, really. There’s only so far you can go in this job. (Simon, Maintainer).

Like Simon, the majority (64%) of PopCo respondents did not believe that they actually had a career path there, even though a detailed progression through the maintainer grades was detailed in the EBA (Table 8.21).

Sean articulated this practical view of the theory as expressed by the EBA.

You don’t have a career path as [a maintainer]. You’d have to do a management course to get anywhere. (Sean, Maintainer).
Table 8.21: Workers' Perception that they have a Career Path at PopCo.

Of course, the fact of progressing through the grades was contingent upon access to training and, as was seen earlier, PopCo did not have a good record in the delivery of training.

\[
\text{You need the training so you can get multiskilled and get up to the different pay levels, but of course we haven't had any. Training has been in the pipeline here for three years at least. (Brian, Maintainer).}
\]

The Perception that Work is Better (or Worse)
Workers in the PopCo survey group were divided over what the reforms had contributed to work opportunities and there was also a range of opinion as to whether their jobs were now more fulfilling, better paid and more varied (Table 8.22).

The majority (71%) of respondents did not consider their jobs to be more fulfilling since the reforms. Those who did, though, were enjoying learning to operate new machines as a result of the job rotation and increased flexibility, like Rodney, or felt that job fulfillment was more a personal that job-related characteristic, like Barry.

\[
\text{I reckon it's more fulfilling, because I'm learning something. (Rodney, Maintainer).}
\]

\[
\text{It's not the job, it's what you put into it. You put your own fulfillment into a job. (Barry, Team Leader).}
\]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job More Fulfilling</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
<th>Job Better Paid</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
<th>Job More Varied</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 28 cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Sample = 28 cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Sample = 28 cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.22: PopCo Workers' Post-Reform Opinion of their Jobs with Respect to Job Fulfillment, Payment and Variety.

The survey group was more evenly divided on the issue of the wages that were obtainable since the reforms. A large minority of respondents (46%) felt their work was not better paid than previously and even those who appreciated what they perceived as increased wages viewed them in the context of the longer working hours.

*The job is better paid now, but that's principally because of the overtime. We're working 12 hour shifts, you know. You don't do that for nothing.* (Peter, Maintainer).

Despite some job rotation and increased flexibility, the majority of respondents (61%) did not find their jobs more varied. The amount of variation depended on the worker's position on the line, though, because job rotation seemed to be encouraged in some areas and not in others. Doug was in the large minority (39%) who did find their job more varied overall.

*I was stuck in one area before, so I prefer this arrangement.* (Doug, Maintainer).

Ernie found his expertise worked against him when it came to job rotation.

*I'm good at this area, so I always get put there.* (Ernie, Maintainer).

Ken had looked for a variation in duties which wasn't dependent upon job rotation, but found that his attitude was not always encouraged.
It really depends on who you’re working under. My old supervisor used to say, “just run the joint - don’t do nothing else”. Whereas I like doing other things around the place. (Ken, Maintainer).

It is hardly surprising, given the generally ambivalent attitudes the PopCo respondents have exhibited towards the outcomes of the reforms that around two-thirds of the survey group didn’t like work better as a result of the changes (Table 8.23).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO YOU LIKE WORK MORE NOW?</th>
<th>Number of workers</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample = 27 cases.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.23: Workers’ Post-Change Opinion of their Jobs.

For the third of the survey group who definitely did not like work more since the reforms, there was an indication that they had no expectation of liking work; these respondents either preferring another type of employment or because their expectation of work was that it should be endured rather than enjoyed. In neither scenario was management to blame. Barry, although working for the money, didn’t have to like the job. He felt it was a shame that he couldn’t earn a similar amount working in his trade.

I’m not working in my trade, so it’s not what I’d prefer to be doing work-wise. (Barry, Team Leader).
I’ve never liked work. As work goes, though, I enjoy the job well enough. (Graham, Maintainer).

A similar orientation to work appeared evident in workers who found their enjoyment of work was the same as before reforms.

I like the pay. It doesn’t matter about the work. (Vic, Maintainer).
I honestly couldn't say that I've ever had any job satisfaction anywhere in my work, ever. So why should this be any different? (Warren, Maintainer).

For a minority, though, the reforms had some positive outcomes. Even the reluctant Doug grudgingly admitted an increased sense of enjoyment.

*I have to say that I am experiencing a bit of a sense of achievement occasionally.* (Doug, Maintainer).

Darryl, too, had expressed many misgivings of the change process but, in the final analysis, gave it the "thumbs up" in terms of its ability to stimulate his interest.

*Since I've become a team leader, I'll admit that the work's become more interesting.* (Darryl, Team Leader).

Adrian had also been 'promoted' to team leader and he gave a glowing report of his new job.

*My job satisfaction and job security has improved, my pay is better and I consider I'm working in a safer, healthier environment.* (Adrian, Team Leader).

The final word on the reforms, though, should go to Mark. His is not the clearest response, but it was a frequent one at PopCo, and it captures the lack of clarity which attended much of the reform process.

*It's just different now. Yes, I'd say that was it. It's different.* (Mark, Maintainer).

**Summary: The Workers' Judgement of the Outcomes of Change**

The majority of PopCo respondents felt secure in their jobs, but did not believe that the reforms necessarily had anything to offer them. The lack of training was seen to compromise a worker's ability to utilise the career path opportunities in the EBA, though a third of the sample did feel there was some ability to progress through the ranks. Where they did feel the reforms had something to offer them, PopCo workers cited a future with more skills, better use of existing skills, or the ability to earn more money as favourable outcomes.

Only a small minority, though, considered the job better paid overall - it generally appearing to be the case that the increased pay came from the
hours worked. The majority of respondents didn't consider their jobs to be more fulfilling or offering more variety, either. Given these impressions, it is perhaps surprising that even a third of the survey group liked their work more as a result of the reforms.

CONCLUSION

Twenty-eight production and maintenance staff at PopCo, a subsidiary manufacturing company in Perth, Western Australia, were surveyed by questionnaire and interview about their experiences of a major restructuring program which the company had instigated in response to some loss of competitive advantage. The case study firstly examined workers' consent to and legitimation of the perceived role of management and the desirable role of workers in change; and, secondly, analysed workers' perceptions of the imperatives, processes and outcomes of change.

Legitimation and Consent

PopCo workers legitimated and consented to management's right to control the organisational agenda in the following areas:
• determination of the broad organisational direction; and
• the leadership and authority functions needed to attain competitive advantage.

This legitimation and consent was complemented by a broad acceptance of the marketplace and corporate constraints within which local management determined their strategies.

Legitimation and consent could be mitigated by management being perceived as
• engaging in arbitrariness or unilateral decision-making which would disadvantage the workforce;
• pursuing objectives which were not deemed congruent with stated goals.
Workers in the PopCo survey group did not legitimate or consent to management control if management sought to
- too closely interfere with the worker's discretion about how to achieve job-level organisational objectives;
- question workers' effort ratios;
- behave opportunistically - using productivity imperatives to cut labour costs or increase control over the labour process; or
- deny workers recognition for their efforts or neglect to follow through on worker input.

Extending the basic theoretical grid which was proposed in Chapter Three, Diagram 8.1 summarises the PopCo survey group's legitimation and consent behaviours and attitudes.

It can be seen from the grid that there was a broad acceptance from the PopCo workforce for the need to maintain and increase competitive advantage and this was assisted by the generally favourable view which respondents had formed of the working conditions at PopCo. The production process itself was instrumental in providing the context for a conscientious work effort - the more diligently workers performed their duties, the more likely the machines would run smoothly and without jamming. With the devolution of quality control onto the line, the number of checks performed by maintainers had increased and this was of some concern to some, though not all, respondents. What appeared to be of greater moment in terms of legitimation and consent was the ability of workers to exert considerable within-job control - over how they prioritised their allocated duties and their self-determination of effort. Although a continuous-feed production line would seem to mitigate against an expectation of job control, PopCo respondents consistently expressed that desire. Within the constraints imposed by the speed and reliability of the line, the survey group expressed some control over the rate and type of activities associated with their within-job performance. This had implications for their perceptions of supervision - as did the value respondents placed on their own expertise in the job.

The supervisory structure at PopCo, with two team leaders and a shift superintendent per shift of 16 men was not legitimised by the survey group. It was seen as too top-heavy and the consent and legitimation
Granting Consent and Legitimation
PopCo workers granted their consent and legitimation to management control by their:
- Acceptance of quality standards
- Commitment to organisational goals
- Perceiving a need for strong leadership provided it was directed at attaining legitimised organisational objectives
- Belief in the benefits of change
- Acceptance of a commonality of interest between workers and management
- Adherence to managerial instructions in preference to craft or traditional principles
- Experiencing a sense of trust
- Striving for better performance
- Desiring to remain with the organisation
- Belief that management rightly sets the organisational-level agenda and determines organisational objectives
- Acceptance of company strategies which are deemed to arise from marketplace or corporate management constraints over which local management are perceived to have little control.
- Acceptance of strategies which workers perceived would improve competitive advantage

Withholding Consent and Granting Legitimation
PopCo workers granted their legitimation but withheld their consent from management control by their:
- Statement of support for other workers
- Acceptance of work problems as inevitable
- Lack of enthusiasm for managerial strategies, such as lean production and team structures, where working towards increased organisational effectiveness is seen as a legitimate goal but where these strategies are not seen by workers to contribute to reaching that goal
- Use of the consultative committee or mass meeting to act as a brake on management's unilateral control, while legitimating 'genuine' productivity initiatives
- Use of sick leave not only for genuine illness, but also "when work gets too much"; thereby not challenging the system which intensified the work process.

Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation
PopCo workers granted their consent but withheld their legitimation from management control by their:
- Expectation of within-job control while working towards management-defined objectives
- Manipulation of time to the workforce's advantage
- Application of worker-defined measures of quality to standardised quality checks.
- Acceptance of the need for training, but disbelief of management's stated intent to train. Workers perceived management as having a verbal, rather than an actual, commitment to training.

Withholding Consent and Legitimation
PopCo workers withheld their consent and legitimation from management control by their:
- Self-determination of the effort level
- Individualisation of rules to best suit the worker's job and thus better tailor it to organisational objectives, thereby rejecting management's belief that workers don't have the expertise to make sound job-related decisions.
- Declared ability to stall or not implement changes
- Desiring worker participation in change so that workforce expertise is available to management
- Lack of cooperation with management initiatives if management were perceived to be behaving opportunistically by using productivity imperatives to cut labour costs or increase control over the workforce
- Withdrawal of effort as a result of lack of recognition or perceived lack of management "follow-through" on worker input.

Diagram 8.1: PopCo Workers' Consent and Legitimation: Locating the Constructs on the Theoretical Grid.
which might have been available to the team concept was compromised by another managerial action which was reflective of the attitudes inherent in the supervisory structure - particularly that team leaders were selected and appointed by management without seeking applications from the workforce.

The lack of training was another important issue for PopCo workers who generally consented to and legitimated training as an activity which would increase multiskilling and, therefore, productivity and competitive advantage through "doing the job better". Management had not delivered on their verbal commitment to training, and this caused no small degree of cynicism in terms of the workforce perception of management's "true" agenda. The consultative committee was used as a brake on the imposition of management's unilateral decision-making which would adversely affect the workforce.

The men in the PopCo survey group, then, could be seen as consenting to and legitimating management's direction of the broad organisational picture and leading workers some way to achieving organisational objectives. This broad legitimacy and granting of consent could be mitigated by workers' perceptions of management strategies or actions as arbitrary or indicative of opportunism, and was withheld if changes were not congruent with the objective of competitive advantage. PopCo workers felt they were better placed than management to fit their job to the organisational objectives and to determine the appropriate amount and type of effort needed to reach those objectives - a perception that was evident in the respondents' interpretation of the process and outcomes of the reforms.

Experiences of Change

PopCo respondents perceived management to be responsible for initiating the reforms and that the imperatives for change arose from two sources - the desire for efficiency in production, and cost-cutting. In identifying cost-cutting as an imperative separate to and different from efficiency, the workers distinguished between

- changes geared towards increasing output (or profit relative to the cost of all factors of production), and
• changes directed towards increasing profit by decreasing labour cost.

The PopCo reforms were formalised in the EBA and there was a varied amount of knowledge about the progress of this Agreement, a majority of workers considering they were appropriately informed, but a large minority perceiving they had been ill-informed of its progress. Where respondents did not feel they had enough knowledge, they attributed this perception to either the bulk of information or the desire of management and unions to manipulate the information to their own ends. The union, via the job delegate or shopfloor meetings, was considered the best source of information about the EBA negotiations.

Most PopCo respondents felt they had reasonable notification of any changes, but there was a perception that management manipulated the type and source of information to achieve their own purpose. There were three major aspects of the communication process which were problematic at PopCo. Firstly, although communication between management and the workforce has generally been perceived to have improved, the workforce remained suspicious that management told them only what they wanted workers to know. Secondly, the removal of the handover period between shift changes has decreased the amount of horizontal communication in the plant. The reduction in personnel levels and the introduction of on-line quality control has had a similar effect: there was little exchange of information between the front and back ends arising from the increase in workload. Communication between staff and technical officers, too, has been seen to be poor, with the workforce sometimes perceiving engineering staff to be aloof; unwilling or unable to provide the explanations necessary for an understanding of technical problems experienced on the line.

The reforms were not seen as overly disruptive to the respondents' personal lives or their ability to perform their jobs to their own satisfaction. Where they were considered disruptive, the length of shift and changes in shift patterns were identified as detrimental to family and social life and could interfere with a worker's productivity or attention to quality requirements. Workers in the survey group generally felt secure in their jobs, though; mainly because of the product monopoly in the local marketplace and their perception that the reforms had rendered the
company "solid" and able to whether future storms. In this view, they reiterated the legitimacy which was accorded to the majority of the reform strategies. Such job insecurity as was experienced was mainly related to potential further decreases in personnel levels.

The majority of PopCo workers in the sample felt there was little to offer from the reforms. Many perceived the potential for a career path to be compromised at PopCo, either because of the company's poor track record on providing training or because the job of maintainer was limited in its scope, even at the highest grades. On the whole, PopCo respondents did not find their work had become more fulfilling or offered more variety as a result of the reforms, and only a small majority considered it better paid.

Given these perceptions, it was not surprising that the majority of the survey group did not feel that the reforms had contributed to their enjoyment of work. These workers did not directly blame management or the types of reforms for this feeling, though. Rather, their responses seemed to be associated with their general expectations of work per se, or of the type of work offered at PopCo in particular. The feeling that came across during the interviews was that you couldn't really expect much from this type of work - and nor were you there to enjoy it (though it will be recalled that PopCo's values, as enshrined in the EBA, desired a happy workforce). Work at PopCo paid well, and as long as you could stick it and while the workers' collective voice could minimise the voracity of management's appetite for greater productivity with an ever-leaner workforce, you could endure.

In conclusion, then, the PopCo case study has indicated how the objective "fact" of relatively high-paying employment and reasonable job security have influenced workers' subjective experiences of organisational change. Yet, within that broad context, there was found to be a considerable degree of variability of experience. Consent and legitimation were flexible and capable of being withheld, and workers identified beneficial as well as undesirable outcomes of change. These and other relevant observations from the case studies will be discussed in the following chapter.
CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

If the world is the mess that it is, then theorists need to recognise this, and so do the users of theory. (Beilharz, 1991:8).

INTRODUCTION

The world of organisational change, if not exactly messy is, at the least, complex. At its outset, this thesis paraphrased Marx by suggesting that organisational change was modified in its working by many circumstances. The aim of this study was to analyse the experience of those circumstances in terms of how individual workers legitimated and consented to them. To this end, 161 workers in four industries were surveyed by interview and questionnaire. Each of the case studies reflected, to some degree, the problems which were identified in Chapter One. Australia in the 1990’s is firmly located in the global marketplace and this has provided unprecedented challenges for government, unions and industry. The Federal Government’s strategy of micro-economic reform has placed the burden of meeting those challenges very squarely on the shoulders of Australian workplaces. Australian unions have facilitated this program of reform through a series of Accords which sought to tie the interests of labour to national productivity objectives. In a climate of consensus industrial relations, unions have cooperated with business in providing a more flexible organisation of work. In achieving this flexibility, business has required workers to adapt to changing organisational structures and processes. It has asked for workers’ hearts and minds - for their commitment to productivity objectives and their loyalty to the firm. A multiskilled, flexible and, above all, highly motivated workforce is the requirement of the workplaces of the 1990’s.
Chapter One argued that organisational change was seen to pose a number of problems for management and workers as they attempted to achieve these objectives and adapt to this increasingly competitive environment. Firstly, to gain those hearts and minds, the imperatives for change had to be legitimated by the workforce. That is to say, workers needed to have a normative acceptance of the fundamental imperatives which were driving the reform processes in individual organisations. Secondly, the workforce had to consent to the change strategies which were employed and cooperate with changing work methods and “ways of doing”. Thirdly, in order to reach their objectives, it was proposed that management had to control the process and progress of organisational change. This was also deemed to be an imperative of workers and their unions for, in order to gain from the changes or minimise its adverse impacts, workers, too, had to exercise some control. The final problem was seen to arise in the consequences of change. More specifically, the unintended consequences - those modifications in its working. Management and workers had to deal with the effects of not only planned, but unplanned, outcomes.

This study, by going to the shop floor and engaging with the key players in the implementation of the micro-economic reform agenda - workers - has emphasised some of the complexities associated with organisational change. The case studies have also illuminated what, and how, workers legitimate and consent to in organisational change and in management activities generally. The manner in which workers acted to exercise their own controls over the change process and its outcomes was also evidenced by the workers in the study, as were their perceptions of management’s control strategies. The study has thus far considered workers’ perceptions as individuals. These individual perceptions have contributed to a bank of data which it is now appropriate to discuss mainly in the aggregate, for brevity and ease of comparison and contrast. It was necessary to go to the individual workers to identify the issues of importance to them. Having done so, the issues themselves can be analysed in a broader context.

Before progressing further, it is necessary to briefly review the potential limitations to the study which were identified in Chapter Four. The study was designed to assess workers’ perceptions of organisational
change, so the material presented does not provide an holistic view of the sample organisations. The imperatives, process and outcomes of change were presented as the workers saw them, not as "facts". Nonetheless, the workers' experiences are not entirely subjective and should not be discounted as such. PopCo workers did work 12 hours shifts plus overtime; waterfront management were not recruiting new permanent staff; and Fincor workers were not able to apply for the new positions which arose as a result of the restructure. Workers may thus have an opinion on why these strategies were employed by management, but their existence is part of the objective experience of work.

Where there was a need to discuss union involvement (as in reference to the waterfront and PopCo enterprise bargaining agreements), or non-involvement (as at MineCo), the discussion followed the tenor of the study - dealing with workers' experiences of the union's role in the reform process. No apology is made for this approach, though it does limit the scope of the study. There are a wealth of aggregate-level surveys which convey the impressions of union representatives and the desire of this study was to trade off scope against a greater depth. The same could be said for the lack of attention to management's description of and rationale for their strategies. Company documents and interviews with personnel managers were included only as contextual information.

The next constraint lies in the construction of the theoretical questionnaire, which has two potential limitations. Firstly, its conception arose from the empirical work of other researchers, which meant an alternative interpretation was brought to bear on observed behaviours which had been noted in another context. However, with no established survey instrument on which to base the investigation, this approach could be considered valid in an exploratory survey. Certainly, not all the proposed categories of response were accommodated by the evidence, as shall be seen shortly. Related to this problem was the design of the questions themselves. The questions were occasionally double-barrelled. That is to say, workers could be deemed to respond to one, other, or both parts of the question. This problem arose from the complexity of the situation which was being investigated - many variables were interrelated and it was decided to deal with problems arising from the complexities rather than simplify the survey instrument and, perhaps, lose some of
the reality. This approach was made possible because, although workers’ independently transcribed their responses to the Theoretical Questionnaire, they did so in the presence of the researcher. Workers who had problems with double-barrelled questions were instructed to assess the situation as a whole and respond accordingly. If they felt they would have responded differently to each part of the question, they were advised to record a “3” (or ‘unsure’) as their response. The survey instrument was statistically reliable at alpha = 0.87, so confidence in its ability to represent workers’ views is reasonably high.

In terms of its generalisability, the study contains responses from 161, predominantly male, workers in four industries in Western Australia. It is thus limited in its ability to draw firm conclusions about the experiences of change in the organisations surveyed, much less at an industry or national level. However, the responses are surprisingly consistent across the industries. Though caution is advised, it may be that the evidence is pointing to some fairly widespread trends in male workers’ experiences of organisational change. A larger survey would be needed to assess the validity of this claim. A different type of survey would be needed to assess whether gender influenced these perceptions.

Prior to discussing how organisational changes were experienced on the shop floor, it is necessary to briefly consider what one might have expected to find. This chapter will re-acquaint the reader with the theoretical perspectives on individuals in organisations and their consent and legitimation behaviours and attitudes. This will provide a base from which it will be possible to establish whether the theorists’ expectations of workers’ behaviour and attitudes were validated by the results of the study. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of those results, their significance to academic discourse and where they might lead future researchers.
Four main theoretical perspectives on employing organisations were surveyed in Chapter Two - organisational theory (OT), organisational behaviour (OB), industrial sociology and radical sociology. There were many schools of social inquiry encompassed within these four approaches. OT had its roots in the sociology of Comte, Durkheim and Weber and its contemporary foundations in the classical management theorists such as Taylor. Its modern leaders have been Parsons, Simon and systems theorists like Katz and Kahn and Lawrence and Lorsch. OB arose from a variety of sources, including the mixture of industrial psychology and sociology of Mayo and the early human relationists and the social psychology of Lewin and Homans. It has been influenced in its progress by the psychology of Maslow, Vroom and Argyris and other motivationists who formed the school of neo human relationists, and the behaviourist approach of Skinner. Industrial sociology shared similar roots with OT but where OT eschewed an interest in deviant behaviour or the social world of which the organisation formed a part, industrial sociologists such as Gouldner incorporated those variables into the analysis of behaviours in organisations. Radical sociology was based on the Marxist precepts that people were the product of their economic environment and that the working relationship was a reflection of the power relations extant in the wider society.

These four approaches were deemed to represent two fundamental viewpoints on the roles of workers and management in the employment relationship; management theory and critical theory. Management theory incorporated OT and OB, and critical theory was represented by industrial and radical sociology. Chapter Two concluded that both management and critical perspectives generally attributed some type of determinism to the behaviour of workers in organisations.

It was found that OT approaches, to the extent that they were at all concerned with individuals, viewed them as socially constrained: either by objective influences from the wider society such as Durkheim's social facts (Parsons, 1951), or the interplay of subjective and objective constraints within the organisation (Blau, 1964; Lawrence and Lorsch,
1967; Silverman, 1970; Woodward, 1965) and external to it (Trist and Bamforth, 1951; Walker and Guest, 1952). The 'fact' that individuals were the products of their environment meant that the perverse influence their subjective orientation brought to bear on rational organisational structures could be overcome: manipulating the environment could cause changes in individual behaviour (Simon, 1957). OB took up the challenge of manipulating both the environment and the workers' needs within it through motivational techniques (Argyris, 1957; Likert, 1967; Vroom, 1964), which were often based on behaviourist premises of individual responses. Structural determinism had been complemented by psychological determinism in the management approaches to understanding behaviour in the organisation.

Critical industrial sociology (sharing some common roots with OT) has inherited three traditions: structural functionalism (from Comte, Spencer, Durkheim and social anthropology); interpretive understanding (from Weber); and social interaction (Merton and Mead). Individuals were generally considered only in relation to the roles they occupied in the organisation (Berger, 1963; Salaman, 1979), and the focus was thus generally objectivist in nature.

An approach which suggested that social reality was in the subjective understanding of individuals, was proposed by Hegel and briefly influenced the young Karl Marx. Marx, however, came to believe that individuals were captives of the economic system of the age in which they lived and, however they subjectively viewed their position, their social position and experiences overwhelmed this subjectivity in a very real sense. It was Marx's materialism which first distinguished between the person and the worker, and the dialectic inherent in his perspective incorporated the notion that the social world could be changed by revolutionary action on the part of the proletariat. These views were underwritten by an understanding of production relations as the fundamental social relationship. Contemporary radical sociological approaches which derive from Marx have generally followed this structural determinism, concentrating on objective social features to explain behaviours in the aggregate.
This thesis argues that where there is a focus on individual attitudes and behaviour to the neglect of structural features within organisations in a capitalist economic context, analysis is determined by unrealistic simplifications of the choices available to the subjects of inquiry. Likewise, where the focus is wholly structural those personal attitudes, values and orientations which workers bring from 'outside' are not given the prominence they deserve in understanding how workers relate to each other and the power system operating in the work context. The main approaches which seek to explain the behaviour of organisations and the people within them take account of only one of these perspectives - either having an emphasis on structural (objective) features or an emphasis on individual and group (subjective) behaviour; not integrating the two. The limitations this places on analysis were evidenced in the way the individual was regarded in relation to organisational change.

Management theory accorded individuals the role of components of change: being either components of the organisation's culture; reactors; elements which had to be made to fit; or active participants in change. Both structural and psychological determinism was evident in the change strategies. To use a mechanical metaphor: care should be taken in the selection of the oil for the component part; using the right lubricant will enable the part to turn, but using the wrong oil will cause it to stick. If, after careful application of the correct lubricant, the part still won't turn, get a new one.

Critical theory also demonstrated its structural determinism in the way workers were perceived as victims of organisational change. It was economic superstructures which circumscribed both workers' organisational experiences and management's imperatives in the change process. Critical theory, though it did not see workers as helpless victims, did not generally admit that there could be any benefit to workers in the capitalist experience of work (other than that induced by false consciousness). Chapter Two argued that a materialist approach, such as that advocated by P.K. Edwards for the analysis of workplace conflict, would encompass a consideration of these benefits. The thesis proposed a materialist perspective of change, which admitted of workers as relatively autonomous actors in the change process. This perspective allowed the
subjective and objective features of the work experience to be analysed, and encompassed both individual and collective responses. Such an approach goes some way to overcoming the limitations of earlier critical perspectives.

The Subjective and Objective Experience of Change: Evidence from the Shop Floor

The evidence from the case studies suggests that individuals are not determined by management strategy, regardless of whether that strategy be predicated on structural or psychological assumptions or a mixture of the two. Within organisations, there were a range of responses from workers who had been subject to the same set of management strategies. For example, MineCo, the Waterfront and PopCo management had all used the strategy of increasing the workers' base-level wages. Yet, within each organisation, workers' responses to this strategy differed markedly. Some workers put the increased wage into the context of overtime being subsumed into the basic pay. Others believed that an increase in the basic pay would mean missing out on the overtime and weekend work which would have resulted in higher wages overall. Another response from workers was that they were earning more, but were working harder for it. Still other workers just accepted the increased wage as reasonable or as a recognition of their efforts by management. Moreover, not only did the subjective experiences of the strategy differ, the objective "fact" of there being more money in the pay packet was disputed. Simply blaming pathological worker behaviour or bad management, then, is not an adequate explanation of worker resistance to management strategy or managerial control.

Indeed, it appears that the subjective and objective factors which influence individual workers' experiences of change are numerous. This is not to say that there were no common observations. Management was seen to be the principle driving force of change in each of the case studies; though the level of management which was accorded responsibility differed. Fincor workers attributed to their CEO the role of principal architect and advocate of the restructure. He was seen to have played a very personal role in the reform process - bestowing and withholding
favours in accordance with what was perceived to be his own, as well as an organisational, agenda. At MineCo and PopCo, corporate management were viewed as having a considerable role in the initiation of the reforms, but PopCo's local management were also seen as instrumental in designing the changes, if not always the imperatives. On the Waterfront, employers and the Federal Government were attributed primary responsibility for the reform agenda, though the union was perceived as a significant player in the process of reform. Notwithstanding who was responsible for its initiation, workers were aware that they had a role in implementing the changes: "keeping up the momentum" or "pulling their weight" to make it happen.

Owning a decision via participating in its genesis has been seen to be associated with an acceptance of reform and employee involvement in ongoing change was purported to be an objective in each of the case studies. However, investigations found that workers in all the case studies often desired input into the changes, not because it promised them material advantage, but because they believed organisational outcomes would be the better for the expertise which they could bring to bear in participating in decisions. This was particularly apparent at Fincor and MineCo, but was evident in all the case studies. In so desiring this participation, workers were legitimating the organisational objectives, but also according considerable legitimacy to the worker's own role in determining how best to fit their jobs to broader organisational requirements.

It was seen that management desired to "fit" the person to the organisation's purposes (Mitchell, et al, 1992), and it could be argued that too much worker input would interfere with this process. Thus, as PK Edwards (1986) noted, management retained considerable control over the benefits which could accrue from the reform process. In deciding which jobs could be rotated, or which people, or what workers should expect to achieve in their jobs, or who was best suited to be team leaders, PopCo management could be construed as attempting to secure fit. Similarly, Fincor's CEO would not allow applications to be made for the new positions arising from the restructure - targeted workers were accorded particular roles. Even on the Waterfront, the new grading system was manipulated to place particular workers on particular grades.
MineCo management attempted to unilaterally make the entire workforce fit a new culture, one which was ostensibly single-status. Yet the study showed that workers in the survey almost unanimously indicated that they could and should attempt to fit their own jobs and abilities to organisational requirements. This is not the way in which management theory generally comprehends fit, and the limited comprehension with which it is accorded appears to work against the organisation's objectives, rather than forwarding them.

In Chapter One, it was proposed that the scope of organisational change in Australian workplaces could encompass major changes in the product or service delivered; restructuring of the labour process; changes in conditions of employment and changes in training strategies (Department of Industrial Relations, 1992). Some or all of these changes were evident in the organisations surveyed in this study. Likewise, the employment relationships in the case studies were indeed individualised as Bacon and Storey (1993) had suggested, thereby upholding management's belief that the individual relationship between employer and employee was the most desirable basis on which to predicate a mutually beneficial association (Henderson, 1986; Hilmer and McLaughlin, 1989; Angwin and McLaughlin, 1990). Industrial relations at PopCo and on the Waterfront had been individualised through single-union, enterprise agreements and, at MineCo, through individual common-law contracts of employment. The individualisation of work organisation had occurred at MineCo, PopCo and on the Waterfront through functional flexibility and/or teamworking. The individualisation of human resource issues was demonstrated in the performance-pay packages at MineCo, PopCo and in some organisations on the Waterfront; and in the TQM strategy at Fincor.

It was earlier proposed that management is promulgating a new semantic context for organisational change in the 1990's (Dunn, 1990). Thus, the objectives of change are couched in terms of performance, flexibility, trust and goodwill (Mitchell, et al, 1992; Robbins, 1992; Walton, 1992). This semantic context was evident at all the workplaces in the study. Fincor sought to meet client needs more quickly and efficiently and, thus, meet ministerial objectives. The CEO desired to inculcate an environment of continuous improvement and customer focus in order to raise the
standard of performance in Fincor. On the Waterfront, flexibility in work tasks was a principal objective of the reform process. Demarcated work roles were changed to allow greater multiskilling and flexibility within and between jobs. At MineCo, improved performance and flexibility were desired as a result of the move to a single-status workforce where trust, empowerment and goodwill could exist. Teamwork and cooperation were to be fostered in an atmosphere where all employees worked together for the mutual success of the company and its workforce. PopCo also sought flexibility and a "mentality of continuous improvement" in its workforce, in a cooperative, teamworking, environment.

However, the results from the case studies suggest that workers comprehended these objectives in terms of three main imperatives which did not always encompass that new semantic context: efficiency, cost-cutting and political imperatives. These imperatives could be interrelated. Efficiency imperatives meant "doing it better". At Fincor, the efficiency imperative was legitimated and consented to as a means of achieving a better work flow with the resources which were available. However, the precise reorganisation was also seen to encompass a political purpose - that of increasing the profile and power of one, managerially-preferred, section of the organisation at the expense of another. On the Waterfront, the efficiency imperative incorporated achieving a more productive workflow and included the objective of increasing through-put by changing out-dated work practices. Workers believed that it would suit management if the union were less powerful and managerial control over the workers were heightened. Although legitimating and consenting to the efficiency imperative, workers thus mitigated the extent of the reforms' legitimacy in their perception that management would squeeze as much as they could from the reform process. The reduction in the labour force on the Waterfront was seen as an efficiency imperative, as mechanisation and containerisation had made it possible to work the wharf with fewer men. While this imperative was accorded considerable consent and legitimacy, its successful implementation was aided by the desire of the majority to see the older men leave "with a decent quid".
MineCo workers also viewed the efficiency imperative as being able to do things better. In their case, this meant being able to respond to variations in customer demand and the increased quality requirements. As the market had been depressed, the efficiency imperative included being able to do this with less people. The workforce consented to and legitimated these imperatives provided the labour process was not intensified: thus distinguishing between the need to work smarter and the desire of the company to make them work harder. At PopCo the workforce consented to and legitimated management's efficiency imperative, which was comprehended as a need for increased quality and reliability of supply in the export market and the need to balance supply and demand in the local market. The PopCo workforce distinguished between these legitimate efficiency imperatives and what they perceived as cost-cutting imperatives. In this, they were not alone. MineCo and Waterfront workers had also failed to legitimate strategies which they perceived as arising from management's desire to lower the labour cost rather than increase output. As one PopCo worker noted, "the way they approach cost-saving here is to be always on the lookout to try and get their savings out of the wages".

These observations confirm Wilkinson's (1983) and Bourricaud's (1987) arguments that structures established in the interests of efficiency can also serve politically astute objectives. The workers distinguished between what was genuinely needed to achieve efficient outcomes and what they perceived as management's incorporation of an alternative agenda. Armenakis, et al, (1993) proposed that workers distinguish between managerial values which are congruent or incongruent with stated goals, and this did seem to be so in the case studies. Workers were also able to distinguish external forces which created a compelling imperative to which management reacted. Corporate management were seen to influence and constrain local management strategies at MineCo and PopCo; the national reform agenda was seen to determine a lot of the organisational change on the Fremantle waterfront; and the Act and ministerial objectives provided change imperatives at Fincor, according to its workforce. Workers not only recognised these external factors but their responses to change were influenced by them. Thus, the case study evidence suggests that the 'context-free' management theories are not
appropriate for an evaluation of the individual comprehension of change imperatives.

The collective voice of workers was seen by critical theory (Marx and Engels, 1972) as a means by which workers could exert some control over the labour process and two of the case studies assessed the workers' evaluation of the influence which they obtained through the union. At PopCo and on the Waterfront, unions were involved in negotiating reforms via enterprise bargaining agreements (EBA's). Yet the case studies showed that workers commonly complained that there was too much information, too quickly relayed and therefore beyond the comprehension of rank and file members associated with the EBA's. PopCo and, to a lesser degree, Waterfront workers perceived that the union was only telling the men what it wanted them to know. Nonetheless, the union was perceived as the best source of information about the reforms and their potential outcomes by most of the workers in these two workplaces. The union was generally accorded a legitimate role in bargaining with management on behalf of the men, and this legitimacy appeared to affect the workers' desire to participate more actively in comprehending the mass of information. It was left up to the union to look out for their interests in the bargaining process. As Jim noted, "a lot of it went over my head". It could, because he trusted the union to see him right.

PopCo workers did consider they were able to have limited influence over management strategy via their collective voice as expressed at mass meetings. However, management were aware of that collective voice and set up informal, "worst case" scenarios prior to the mass meeting, using the grapevine to manipulate the collective response when the worst case turned out to be "not so bad". The influence that was enjoyed by PopCo workers was, therefore, not extensive. They had no influence, for example, on the programming or manning levels on the line. On the Waterfront, workers did not seek to influence management. They desired to have input into union decision-making. It was the union, not the workers, which was the legitimate negotiator with management. Even the consultative committees on the Waterfront weren't accorded much credibility in achieving desirable outcomes for the men. They did
not appear to have the same legitimacy as was accorded the union officials.

This situation illustrates that, even where there is an active union, as at PopCo and on the Waterfront, the type of input to change can vary markedly. On the Waterfront, all input was to the union, based on the union’s stated position on the terms and conditions of employment. Workers at mass meetings would argue with union officials as to whether the union’s response to management’s demands was appropriate. Interviews with union officials suggested that they would argue back and tell the men that the game was being played differently now; that they couldn’t always get what they’d like to get, and this was the best alternative. The fight was fought in the smoko rooms and the union’s was the only voice management heard. Many workers felt they were “having a say” but not influencing union policy. But the union was the expert. At PopCo, however, all input was through the union and the consultative committee. Workers would discuss shop floor changes which management proposed and the consultative committee would then negotiate with management without relying on external union officials. The PopCo workers seemed to feel as though they had more actual influence over policy, being at one less step of a remove from management. However, the context of industrial relations is different on the factory floor from the Waterfront and it is behoves critical theory to take account of the particular context if the nature of collective resistance is to be fully appreciated.

Critical theory is also limited in its appreciation of outcomes. Because workers are seen in “universalistic terms”, ways of response are perceived as “equally open to all workers” (PK Edwards, 1986:224-225). The shop floor shows that this is not the case; moreover, there may be either subjective or objective factors which influence individual responses or initiations. Certainly, there was something ‘special’ about Fincor’s CEO who permitted the tea lady, Sally (herself special for desiring it), to rise from tea lady to applications coordinator. The objective fact of a secure asset base made John’s job security at PopCo of little account to
him. Yet to Marty, at MineCo, the ability to work in a well paid job near
town in a regional centre was a luxury he would strive to maintain.\textsuperscript{187}

The radical perspectives within critical theory were also constrained in
their appreciation of outcomes because they believed that good outcomes
from their incorporation in the capitalist labour process were not
available to workers. This is indeed a moot point, and one which has
gnawed at many contemporary industrial relations researchers. Though
mindful of the limitations of capitalism in terms of workers' achieving
self-determination, and critical of its overweening assumptions of its
benefit to society, one is faced with the fact of healthy, well fed and
educated workers on the shop floor. However much they grumbled
about their actual conditions, few of the workers wanted to try their luck
elsewhere. Elsewhere would, of course, be much the same, and there is a
risk attached to leaving. Likewise, workers are, to a certain extent,
“programmed” to want videos, boats and holiday homes. These are not
necessaries of life, but their attainment has become part of the worker's
expectation of lifestyle, and must motivate them to stay in secure
employment. The objective fact is that this research occurred in a
proletarianised society: philosophising about the ability of capitalism to
allow people to reach their “real” potential is beyond the scope of this
thesis. There must come a point where the search for the counterfactual.ends and the analysis of the factual begins.

The research findings in the four case studies bear out the utility of the
materialist approach in illuminating the complexities of workplace
change. In particular, it facilitates the appreciation of the outcomes of the
organisational reform as the workers perceive them, assuming that
proletarianised workers can enjoy some “real” fruits of their association
with capitalism. In the case studies, these fruits were seen to be of an
objective and subjective nature; frequently a mixture of the two.
Organisational change, for example, could result in an increased
responsibility and scope in a job. This could, and frequently did, mean a
larger workload - which is the objective ‘fact’. This fact, though, could be

\textsuperscript{187} This is an important point, and one which may not seem significant to non-Australians. The distances are so great in Western Australia! The regional centre where MineCo was located was five hours from the capital. To have mining operations mere hours from the city, rather than two or three days' drive into the desert was a luxury few mining workers in the State could enjoy.
viewed as a challenge or a burden; depending not only on the job, but on the worker. That is to say, that Sue found her new duties at Fincor challenging and exciting need not be because they would be so for everyone, but they were for her. The MineCo operators had all had similar impositions made into their work circuits, with an increase in duties and responsibilities and a decrease in staff. Yet to some workers, the job was made more interesting and to others, it was a mere intensification of the labour process.

Summary: The Workers’ Experiences of Change

The range of workplace changes which were predicted in Chapter One were present in the case studies, as was the anticipated individualisation of the employment relationship. The new semantic context of work was also evident, though the case studies indicated quite clearly that the workforce comprehension of this context was often qualitatively different from management’s stated imperatives.

Management theory suggested that the responses of individual workers could be determined by managerial strategy in the workplace. The case studies, however, found that the range of subjective and objective factors which influenced individual responses were numerous. There were common observations - the experience of work was not infinitely idiosyncratic - but such a degree of structural or psychological as the management perspectives assumed was not apparent.

Critical theory, too, generally proved limited in its ability to capture the nature of workers’ experiences of organisational change. Even the notion of workers exercising control through the union was seen to be experienced differently according not only to objective features of particular workplaces, but also through a subjective dimension. Similarly, workers exhibited a variety of responses to the outcomes of organisational change. The shop floor evidence suggested that to continue with the iteration that workers can gain no benefit from organisational change within the capitalist labour process is inappropriate if workers’ views are to accorded credibility in actual workplace research.

The case study evidence showed that a materialist approach, combining objective and subjective experiences of change, and allowing workers’
reported outcomes to be deemed "real", permitted a very detailed picture of the experiences of workplace change to emerge. Yet even this approach stopped short of ascertaining two mechanisms which this thesis suggested underlay these experiences. It was proposed in Chapter One that an essential ingredient in gaining a better understanding of these subjective and objective experiences would be obtained through a detailed study of legitimation and consent behaviours and attitudes on the shop floor.

**Legitimation And Consent In Organisations**

**Consent**
In Chapter Two, this thesis proposed that consent, while not directly addressed by management theory, was approximated by the notion of cooperation. Consent was defined in Chapter One as recognition of institutionalised rules (Mahnkopf, 1986:47) - a behavioural response to particular workplace activities or expectations. Management theory assumed that workers would be cooperative with those activities and expectations provided they were properly educated towards and could see the sense in management initiatives, but did not directly address the notion of consent as such. Critical theory was better able to deal with an examination of the processes by which worker consent could be obtained and maintained by management. Consent and legitimation were tied together in that legitimation was seen to provide the ideological backdrop for a generalised level of consent to a range of organisational behaviours and orientations.

**Legitimation**
Legitimation was seen in Chapter One to encompass a sphere of normative orientation which was shared by management and workers and which served to legitimate authority (Mahnkopf, 1986), a definition which was a useful starting point to operationalise the process by which these shared orientations are produced and reproduced. In the literature review, it was seen that management theory, while acknowledging control to be problematic, largely accepted management's legitimate right to control the labour process. Thus, the notion of legitimacy within the employment relationship was generally unexplored and this thesis
suggested that the notion of commitment encompassed the way in which a normative orientation was addressed in management theory.

It was left to critical theory to inquire into the processes of legitimation. Industrial sociologists perceived legitimacy within the employment relationship to be variable, manufactured and capable of being withheld; moreover, legitimacy was seen to be a factor of socialisation (internal and external to the firm) and power. Marxist and labour process theorists extended their analysis of legitimation one step further, in questioning the legitimacy of the capitalist production relationship itself. The legitimacy of the employment relationship associated with the capitalist labour process was seen to be produced and reproduced over time, principally via ideological means which served to justify and reinforce the 'naturalness' of working life in the capitalist state.

The lesson which is learned from radical industrial sociology and labour process theory is that legitimacy is accorded by workers to management; management theory details the techniques of generating commitment and identification with managerial norms, and the critical approaches of the radical theorists inform analysis by indicating how workers participate in the reproduction of these legitimations. However, critical theory, while admitting the possibility of legitimation and consent, had not fully operationalised the concepts in terms of actual behaviours and attitudes on the shop floor (PK Edwards, 1986; Thompson, 1989). This thesis was designed to undertake this task.

In Chapter Three, a theoretical grid of possible consent and legitimation behaviours and attitudes was proposed. The operationalisation of these concepts was represented by Diagram 3.2, which is reproduced here as Diagram 9.1.
### Granting Consent and Legitimation
- Acceptance of quality imperatives
- Commitment to organisational goals
- Perceiving benefits in change
- Acceptance of bureaucratic procedures
- Acceptance of management's role in change
- Acceptance of a commonality of interest between workers and management
- Acceptance of worker powerlessness
- Perceiving a need for strong leadership
- Internalisation of the notion of a fair day's work for a fair day's wages
- Experiencing a sense of trust
- Striving for better performance

### Withholding Consent and Withholding Legitimation
- Expectation of within-job control
- Manipulation of time to the workforce's advantage
- Frustrated compliance with management control

### Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation
- Support for other workers
- Working to rule
- Intending to quit
- Absenteeism
- Bending rules to work faster or better
- Disputing changes in the division of labour
- Acceptance of work problems as inevitable

### Withholding Consent and Granting Legitimation
- Self-determination of the effort level
- Individualisation of rules
- Stalling or non-implementation of changes
- Adherence to craft or professional principles, or traditional ways of working, in preference to management instructions
- Desiring worker participation in change

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Diagram 9.1: Worker Consent and Legitimation: Locating the Constructs on the Theoretical Grid.

The theoretical perspectives on individuals in organisations provided a backdrop against which actual workplace experiences could be evaluated. Likewise, the consent and legitimation grid provided a theoretical starting point for the investigation of actual consent and legitimation behaviours in the workplace. The results from these investigations will now be discussed.

**LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT ON THE SHOP FLOOR**

The responses of surveyed workers which represent their legitimation and consent behaviours and attitudes is shown in Tables 9.1a-d (which
can be found on pp. 484-488). An explanation of the behaviour/attitude is provided to reacquaint the reader with the theoretical rationale for the typology. Behaviours and attitudes from the posited theoretical grid (Diagram 9.1) are indicated by italics. Those which extend the model are in normal type.

Workers can be seen in Table 9.1a to consent to and legitimate a wide range of managerial controls. It was shown that, in all organisations surveyed, a majority of workers: adhered to managerial instructions in preference to craft or traditional principles; wanted to remain with the employing organisation; believed that management rightly set the organisational agenda and determined organisational objectives; accepted the quality imperative which predicated changes in all the firms surveyed; were committed to organisational goals; accepted that there existed a commonality of interest between workers and management; perceived a need for strong leadership; considered themselves trustworthy and able to meet organisational objectives, and strove for better performance. These results generally accorded with what had been proposed in the preliminary theoretical grid, except for the observation that workers consented to and legitimated management’s role in designing and directing the “big picture”, which extended the model.

The preliminary model also proposed that workers who consented to and legitimated management control would accept their own powerlessness in the relationship. This was not seen to be the case in any of the organisations surveyed. In similar vein, there was limited support for the acceptance of the notion that management should determine a fair day’s work, with only a small majority of Fincor workers adhering to that view. Nor was there a widespread acceptance of management’s procedural rules or their role in the change process, MineCo being the only organisation where a majority of workers legitimated and consented to these aspects of the labour process.

Except for the Waterfront workers, the majority of workers in the survey gave a general level of consent and legitimation to management’s reasons for the changes and agreed that the outcomes would be beneficial in some way. Waterfront workers were not prepared to grant this general level of consent and legitimation, but did uphold management’s right to
have changes implemented, as did Fincor workers. The Waterfront workers were prepared to concede this right even if the new ways of working contravened union rules or traditional practices. In PopCo and MineCo, too, workers consented to and legitimised management strategies which were either congruent with legitimated imperatives or were within management’s legitimated sphere of influence.

Table 9.1b indicates that a majority of workers in all organisations surveyed consented to his/her role in performing allocated tasks, but did not legitimate management involvement in determining the minutiae of those tasks. This phenomenon was deemed “within-job control” and another aspect of it was evident in the workers’ manipulation of time to their own advantage, which occurred in all organisations. At Fincor and PopCo, a desire for within-job control was also expressed by the application of worker-defined measures of quality to standardised quality checks and, at MineCo, to a compliance with instructions while withholding legitimation from current supervisory practices.

The granting of consent and withholding of legitimation was also evident in Waterfront workers’ frustrated compliance with management control, and their consent to new employment practices on the grounds that the union had entered into an agreement with management. The legitimacy arose not from management’s instructions, but from the union’s negotiation of those boundaries within which management could instruct.

It was proposed that workers might demonstrate withholding their consent and granting their legitimation by supporting other workers without challenging the general legitimacy of management’s role in the labour process. Table 9.1c shows that this was indeed seen to be the case in all organisations surveyed. Likewise, the proposed legitimation of the hierarchical structures but lack of consent to particular acts was evident in the majority of workers’ acceptance of work problems as inevitable. The survey also demonstrated that workers in all organisations legitimated management objectives but did not consent to all the strategies which management deemed necessary to achieve those objectives - many of these strategies being seen as peripheral to this achievement, according to workers.
The preliminary grid suggested that workers might grant their legitimation but withhold their consent to management control by working to rule, intending to quit, absenteeism, bending rules, or disputing changes in the division of labour. Of these, none of the organisations showed that workers would work to rule or intended to quit, and only PopCo demonstrated a majority tendency to absenteeism. At Fincor, workers would bend rules to work faster or better, indicating their legitimation of the organisational objectives, but not consenting to management’s strategies in best meeting them. On the Waterfront, it was seen that workers legitimated management’s role in determining the division of labour in the first instance, but did not consent to an arbitrary reallocation of that task division. This desire of workers to withdraw consent from what they saw as a expression of arbitrary or unilateral management control was also evident at PopCo.

Table 9.1d shows that the suggestion that workers could indicate the withholding of consent and legitimation from management control by their self-determination of the effort level, the individualisation of rules and the desire for worker participation was evidenced in all organisations surveyed. The majority of workers would not, however, adhere to craft or professional principles in favour of managerial instructions, though some workers indicated that they were prepared to stall or not implement changes which they believed would have an adverse job impact or were deemed a waste of time.

On the Waterfront, a majority of workers would not implement unsafe work practices and MineCo workers would avoid work methods which meant workers had to work harder rather than smarter. PopCo workers would not legitimate or consent to management strategies which were perceived to be an opportunistic use of productivity imperatives which also served to increase managerial control or cut labour costs. This refusal to consent to or legitimate what was perceived as the hidden agenda was also evident in MineCo workers’ non-acceptance of management’s stated values with respect to promotion and training and workforce status. If management were not sincere in their stated philosophy, they might only give lip service to “worker-friendly” strategies and workers at MineCo, PopCo and on the Waterfront all
indicated that they would withdraw their effort as a result of management putting in an effort which was less than equal to their own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BEHAVIOUR/ATTITUDE</strong></th>
<th><strong>THEORETICAL EXPLANATION IN TERMS OF LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>Case</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of quality imperative.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates changes which are based on a quality imperative.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to organisational goals.</td>
<td>The worker legitimates and consents to working towards goals which management has defined.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving benefits in change.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management’s reasons for the change and agrees that the outcomes will be beneficial in some way(s).</td>
<td>F M P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of bureaucratic procedures.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management’s procedural rules.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of management’s role in change.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management’s role in the change process by perceiving that they would have acted similarly if they were in management’s position.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of a commonality of interest between workers and management.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates the idea that the worker’s and the organisation’s fortunes are linked.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of worker powerlessness.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates the power differential between management and labour and the hierarchy of control which that differential implies.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving a need for strong leadership.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management’s role in directing organisational activities towards legitimated management objectives.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striving for better performance.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management’s performance standards.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of management’s desired changes.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management’s right to have changes implemented.</td>
<td>F W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of management’s ability to determine a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates a standard of effort and reward which usually reflects the interests of management.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.1a: Granting Consent and Legitimation: Evidence from the Case Studies.

Cont’d on p.485
**GRANTING CONSENT AND LEGITIMATION**

*F=Finco  W=Waterfront  M=MineCo  P=Popco  A=All  N=None

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEHAVIOUR/ATTITUDE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL EXPLANATION IN TERMS OF LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT</th>
<th>* Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing a sense of trust.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management's role in determining the tasks and objectives which the worker can then be &quot;trusted&quot; to meet.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to managerial instructions in preference to craft/professional/traditional principles.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management as the appropriate source of instruction about the performance of the labour process - not external groups.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desiring to remain with the organisation (cf. Table 9.1c).</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates the control system operating in the firm and does not wish to substitute it for another in an alternative firm.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientious application to work (cf. Table 9.1c).</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates the appropriate performance of their duties; neither taking unnecessary sickies, working to rule, or disputing changes in the division of labour.</td>
<td>F M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that management rightly sets the organisational-level agenda and determines organisational objectives.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management's role in designing the &quot;big picture&quot;.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to the new ways of working even if they contravene union rules or traditional practices.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates the new work methods which reflect the perceived need for greater productivity in order to protect jobs in the longer term.</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of the new methods of conflict resolution.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates the conflict resolution mechanisms which reflect the relative bargaining positions of management and the union at the present time, and which have been determined by the industrial relations commission.</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of changes to the work process which mean workers are working &quot;smarter&quot;.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates changes to the labour process which are designed to increase its efficiency and effectiveness without increasing its intensity.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of company strategies which are deemed to arise from marketplace or corporate management constraints over which local management are perceived to have little control.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management's declared decision-making constraints and parameters.</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of strategies which workers perceive will improve competitive advantage.</td>
<td>The worker consents to and legitimates management's knowledge of the marketplace and their ability to design appropriate strategies.</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.1a: Granting Consent and Legitimation: Evidence from the Case Studies.
### GRANTING CONSENT AND WITHHOLDING LEGITIMATION

*F=Fincor  W=Waterfront  M=MineCo  P=Popco  A=All  N=None

#### BEHAVIOUR/ATTITUDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour/Attitude</th>
<th>Theoretical Explanation in Terms of Legitimation and Consent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expectation of within-job control while working towards organisational objectives.</td>
<td>The worker consents to his/her role in performing allocated tasks, but management involvement in the minutiae of the task performance is not legitimated. Case A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation of time to the advantage of the workforce - covering for other workers' absences.</td>
<td>The worker consents to the performance of allocated tasks, but does not legitimate management's role in always deciding when the task will be performed, or by whom. Case A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated compliance with management control.</td>
<td>The worker consents to what is required by the control system, but does not legitimate management's intrusion into his/her self-determination at work. The worker thus does only what is required, and no more. S/he is not proactive in reaching organisational goals. Case W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consenting to new employment practices on the grounds that the union has entered into agreement with management.</td>
<td>The worker consents to the new employment practices arising from the reforms but the legitimation accorded to those practices arises, not from a legitimation of management's role in determining them, but from the union's role. Case W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complying with instructions, but not legitimating supervisory techniques.</td>
<td>The worker consents to management's right to control the labour process, but does not legitimate what s/he perceives to be outdated management and supervisory methods which seek to decrease a worker's autonomy. Case M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of worker-defined measures of quality to standardised quality checks.</td>
<td>The worker consents to management's desire for quality standards, but does not legitimate management as the sole source of determination of that standard. The worker will use his/her discretion in determining whether an article is of an appropriate quality. Case F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of the need for training, but disbelief of management's stated intent to train - perceiving management to have a verbal, rather than an actual, commitment to training.</td>
<td>The worker consents to the need for training to occur, but does not legitimize management's declared position as a provider of training. Case P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9.1b**: Granting Consent and Withholding Legitimation: Evidence from the Case Studies.
## WITHHOLDING CONSENT AND GRANTING LEGITIMATION

### THEORETICAL EXPLANATION IN TERMS OF LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEHAVIOUR/ATTITUDE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL EXPLANATION IN TERMS OF LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for other workers.</td>
<td>The worker generally legitimates the role of management in determining the allocation of tasks in the labour process but, in certain circumstances, s/he will act to support another worker who is adversely affected by a management decision. The support need not be directed at withdrawal of effort.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working to rule (cf. Table 9.1a).</td>
<td>The worker legitimates management's right to establish workplace rules and procedures. Lack of consent can be expressed through a rigid adherence to those rules, which may slow down the work process.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intending to quit (cf. Table 9.1a).</td>
<td>The worker legitimates the role of management generally and does not seek to change the existing control system. Lack of consent is expressed through wishing to substitute that control system for another in an alternative firm.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absenteeism (cf. Table 9.1a).</td>
<td>The worker expresses his/her lack of consent to the control system without challenging its legitimacy.</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bending rules to work faster or better.</td>
<td>The worker legitimates the objectives of the organisation but does not consent to the rules which management has established to meet them.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disputing changes in the division of labour.</td>
<td>The worker legitimates management's role in determining the division of labour in the first instance but does not consent to an arbitrary reallocation of that task distribution.</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of work problems as inevitable</td>
<td>The worker legitimates the hierarchical structures and managerial role and does not seek to change either, but nonetheless will withdraw his/her consent from particular acts (seeing them as problems to be overcome) while continuing to legitimate the whole. Management's unpredictability might be one of these &quot;problems&quot; with which the worker must contend.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of enthusiasm for management strategies deemed peripheral to organisational objectives (such as the TQM strategy at Fincor; the TQS strategy and unreasonable intensification of work effort on the waterfront; or the lean production methods and team structures at MineCo and PopCo).</td>
<td>The worker legitimates management's objectives, but does not consent to the ability of certain strategies to meet those objectives.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of the consultative committee or mass meeting to act as a 'brake' on management's unilateral control.</td>
<td>The worker uses collective means to withhold consent from particular management initiatives, while legitimating 'genuine' productivity initiatives.</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 9.1c: Granting Legitimation and Withholding Consent: Evidence from the Case Studies.
WITHHOLDING CONSENT AND LEGITIMATION

*F=Fincor  W=Waterfront  M=MineCo  P=Popco  A=All  N=None

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEHAVIOUR/ATTITUDE</th>
<th>THEORETICAL EXPLANATION IN TERMS OF LEGITIMATION AND CONSENT</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-determination of the effort level.</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's conception of the worker as unable to determine his/her appropriate effort level.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualisation of rules to best tailor the job to organisational objectives.</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's conception of the worker as unable to make appropriate work-related decisions.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stalling or non-implementation of changes. (Such as waterfront workers' refusal to implement changes that would not make a positive contribution to productivity or, if no productivity benefit, to better outcomes for the workforce. At PopCo, workers declared they had the ability to stall, but it was not clear whether or not they would use it).</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's role in designing changes which have adverse job impacts or which workers think are a waste of time to implement.</td>
<td>W ?P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for worker participation initiatives so that workforce expertise is available to management.</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate the role of management in being the sole architect of changes which are going to impact on the organisation as a whole and the worker's job in particular.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to professional or craft group principles in preference to obeying management's instructions. (cf. Table 9.1a).</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's role in determining how the job should now be performed.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to implement unsafe work practices.</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's right to institute work practices which put the worker's safety at risk.</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance of work methods which mean workers have to work harder rather than smarter (cf Table 9.1a).</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's right to intensify the labour process.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to accept management's assurances that a system of meritorious promotion and training opportunities was available.</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's declared role as a fair employer.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to accept the declared existence of a single-status workforce.</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's rhetorical statements that &quot;us and them&quot; barriers have fallen.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of cooperation with management initiatives if workers perceive that management behave opportunistically by using productivity imperatives to cut labour costs or increase control over the workforce.</td>
<td>The worker does not consent to or legitimate management's use of legitimated productivity/competitive imperatives to increase unilateral control. S/he also does not consent to or legitimate the reduction of labour cost as an appropriate strategy of competitive advantage.</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal of effort as a result of lack of recognition or perceived lack of management &quot;follow-through&quot; on worker input.</td>
<td>The worker does not legitimate or consent to an effort expense which exceeds management's own. The worker also does not legitimate or consent to his/her continued initiation of changes to work practices which are consistently unrecognised by management.</td>
<td>W M P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.1d: Withholding Consent and Legitimation: Evidence from the Case Studies.
A Model of Consent and Legitimation Behaviours and Attitudes

The information in Tables 9.1a-d has been represented diagrammatically in Figure 9.1. It can be seen that the empirical studies confirm critical theory's suggestion that consent and legitimation are flexible and capable of being withheld. The model suggests that there are a number of variables which are involved in this process. Proceeding down the decision tree which is implied in the model, the first of these variables is management's proper sphere of influence - in effect, the worker's zone of acceptance of managerial prerogative. Should management be perceived to be acting within this acceptable sphere of control, some degree of consent or legitimation will be accorded the instruction, strategy, reform imperative, or whatever (the limitations of the scope of this sphere of legitimate control will be discussed shortly). A similar granting of consent or legitimation is possible if the worker perceives management's strategy to be beneficial either to the organisation or to labour. The model further suggests that, if the outcomes are deemed by workers to be desirable for labour, they will always be consented to and legitimated.

Consent and/or legitimation will probably be withheld if the worker perceives the strategy to be undesirable for the organisation or industry, or for labour. This need not affect implementation per se, but will probably affect the quality of implementation. It could well be that gaining the hearts and minds of workers to changes which would adversely affect their experience of work would be, at least problematic, and probably impossible. It is evident that workers are exercising judgement on managerial strategies, initiatives and behaviour and the judgements they form are contributing to their consent to and legitimation of management action and orientation. The complexity of this process suggests that it would be difficult for management to design strategies which would provide predictable outcomes in terms of widespread worker commitment or cooperation and "off-the-shelf" management packages look fairly weak in this scenario.

If workers desired within-job control or to participate in decision-making, which was evident in all the case studies, it appears that they will consider them to be legitimate desires. Management incursions into what workers view as their own legitimate sphere of control will be
Figure 9.1: Possible Consent and Legitimation Behaviours and Attitudes
regarded as just that - an incursion. Although workers might consent to strategies which intrude into this sphere of worker control, they will not be legitimated. This is important in terms of the level of compliance or active cooperation which management desires from the workforce. It was proposed in Chapter One that a minimum level of compliance with management strategies and objectives was not what was required of workers in the 1990's, with the weight of the micro-economic recovery of the nation on their shoulders. Rather, the hearts and minds of the workforce were desired. The evidence from the shop floor suggests that gaining those hearts and minds will be difficult while management continues to trample over workers’ expectations of job control and participation in decision-making. This is exacerbated by the widespread perception among respondents that they could contribute significantly to the attainment of organisational objectives were they granted more autonomy overall and participation in change in particular. As was earlier discussed, management theory might suggest at this point that bad management practice is interfering with the inherent cooperativeness and commitment of the workforce.

To a degree, this could be correct, but bad management is too glib an explanation. Workers appear to have a proactive desire to control an important part of the labour process which is independent of the quality of management. Nor does it just relate to an affective attachment to an organisation, existing as it does across job types and industries. Rather, it seems to arise from the ability to make rational decisions about the organisation relative to one’s own place in it. Rejection of management strategies, then, need not be irrational, or based on “what it means for my job”. In short, workers may be as capable as management in determining appropriate processes and outcomes for organisations (this is particularly so given that managers, too, are employees of organisations, albeit powerful ones). Indeed, respondents indicated that, while management might have better knowledge of the macro-level picture, workers were the repository of expertise at the micro-level and, in particular, at articulating the micro- with the macro-level.

Workers were firm, too, in their desire to control their own work effort, suggesting that the effort bargain was indeed occurring at the point of production on a daily basis, in the performance of the work. Largely, it
can be supposed that it was part of the invisible negotiation which occurs over effort on the shop floor at an individual level. Workers can throw as much or as little of the efforts of which they are capable into the production process; and this is not dependent on industry or employer - being present even within workers on a factory line with little overt ability to control their effort expense. Management’s attempts to intrude into a worker’s decision about his/her appropriate effort expense will be considered *ultra vires* and will be neither consented to nor legitimated.

**THE COMPLEX EXPERIENCE OF CHANGE**

The purpose of this study has been to illustrate the complexity of the experience of workplace change. The question directing the research was “how do workers experience organisational change?” The answer is, in a variety of ways. According to their own lights, and in common with others. The study has shown that the fact that they are workers living in a proletarianised society affects their experience of change. They need a job, they’d generally like to keep *this* one, and they don’t want to find themselves on the scrap heap because they can’t move with the times. They will do what they can to adapt to the changes in the organisation of work, which itself will change somewhat from the blueprint in its concrete operation. Within the job itself, workers have shown they have a strong desire for job and effort control and, indeed, consider that they do exert much of that control over their job. Even workers on production lines considered they individualised the job to their own requirements. Both desirable and undesirable consequences arose from the reforms, but the workers considered each equally “real”. The evidence points to the utility of PK Edwards’ (1986) materialist conception of the labour process in understanding the worker’s experience of change. The unknown in the model is the effect which worker actions and reactions have on management strategy, but it was not the purpose of this study to inquire into that aspect, merely to chart workers’ experiences of the change strategies. However, the model would be a useful one for comparing firms, and would remind the researcher that shop floor workers as well
as managers, supervisors and shop stewards are the appropriate focus for research.

Another unknown which this study highlights is the effect of gender on the experience of work. The three blue collar case studies suggested an experience of work that was particularly male. This study eschewed the inclusion of gender and is the weaker for it. However, in not addressing the issue, it has certainly demonstrated the need for an investigation of male gender in relation to work.

This study has also demonstrated a need to look at workers' desire for job control, and the means by which they attain or are thwarted in that desire. The role this plays in management's seeking cooperation in the labour process is largely the province of organisational behaviourists at present, and industrial relations, with its contextual strength, could make a valuable contribution to this area. The study has shown that workers' sense of their own contribution to the firm is not solely based upon instrumental or affective factors. Rather, it can be a rational, calculative base of expertise and the ability to discern where their job can best contribute to organisational goals and effectiveness. This is a quality management greatly admires in itself, but does not credit the workforce as owning. "Tayloring", that is to say, tailoring or fine-tuning the job to most effectively meet organisational goals, is indeed occurring in organisations. However, contrary to Taylor's expectations, this study shows that the boot can be on the other foot and that it is workers who are doing it.

Legitimation and consent to change and to management control in general were operationalised according to a preliminary theoretical grid which directed inquiries on the shop floor. Individual workers were also surveyed about their experiences and comprehension of the imperatives, process and outcomes of change. The findings suggest that workers will probably grant consent and legitimation to strategies, controls or objectives which either reside within management's appropriate sphere of influence, or provide desirable outcomes for the organisation or for labour. Management's appropriate sphere of influence is over the "big picture" - adjusting organisational objectives to the marketplace constraints and opportunities. The study indicated that desirable
outcomes for workers might be increased wages, more interesting or challenging work, recognition for effort, promotion, the ability to learn new skills, or more time with the family. Desirable outcomes for the organisation, which the workers in the study only indirectly linked to their own positions, included the improvement or maintenance of competitive advantage, thereby increasing an organisation’s or industry’s long-term viability. Any combination of these variables may result in the worker granting legitimation and consent.

Consent will probably be granted, but legitimation withheld if the worker perceives the control initiative to be located within management’s appropriate sphere of influence or to have desirable outcomes for the organisation. The case studies showed that legitimation can be withheld on the grounds that workers may desire to participate in the decision-making about the strategy, or if management has intruded too far into the worker’s sphere of job control. The worker’s sphere of job control exists within the job and in articulating the job with organisational objectives. The workers in the study believed that they had expertise in the performance of their job and, on the basis of this knowledge, were better placed than management to adjust the job so it fitted well with other jobs, thus articulating with the achievement of legitimated organisational objectives.

The evidence made it apparent that legitimation will probably be granted but consent withheld if, although management is seen to be acting within their proper sphere of influence, the worker perceives the outcomes of management’s control to be undesirable for either the organisation or for labour. Undesirable outcomes for the organisation included the loss of production time due to breakdown of inappropriately maintained plant or the difficulty in reaching objectives occasioned by strategies which made the work flow more complex. Undesirable outcomes for labour included intensification of the labour process, decrease in within-job control and bad morale.

It was demonstrated that consent and legitimation may be withheld if the worker perceived that the outcomes of management’s control would result in undesirable outcomes for either the organisation or labour; or if
it intruded on the worker's desire for job control, participation in decision-making or control over effort.

The question arises as to whether this model has any predictive capacity. There will be some difficulties, given the limited scope of the survey, but it is cautiously proposed that the similarity of response across industries suggests that there are some common behavioural and attitudinal responses in workers. However, such things as the worker's conception of management's proper sphere of influence or where their own desire for job control "cuts in" are going to be subject to a range of factors internal and external to the organisation. Suffice to say that a general conclusion which can be reached is that workers do grant management quite a broad role of legitimate influence over the labour process. This is not, however, complete. It is constrained by the workers' views of their own legitimate sphere of control within the labour process. Simultaneous antagonism and cooperation is thus possible because of the way workers delineate those spheres of influence, and the extent of each of these areas of control will be dependent upon a range of subjective and objective components of the working experience in a capitalist society. It is by engaging with workers that these subjective and objective experiences are illuminated; grand theories are insufficient to the cause of understanding and the complexity of the "real" experience may defy the theorist's blueprint. It was earlier noted that empirical data does not always fall easily into standard theory boxes, and individuals are particularly adept at defying attempts at consistent and parsimonious classification. Thus, it is fitting to close with an observation made in 1937 by Orwell (1989:164-165) in *The Road to Wigan Pier*,

"I have yet to meet a working miner, steel-worker, cotton-weaver, docker, navvy or whatnot who was 'ideologically' sound."
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APPENDIX ONE

THE THEORETICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The format for the theoretical questionnaire is indicated in question one. Thereafter, in the interest of brevity, the questions are listed without the formatting.

ID_____
REC_____ 
This questionnaire uses a scale to gauge your responses. Please circle one number only after each sentence. Throughout the scale, the following scores apply:
1 = strongly agree
2 = agree
3 = no opinion/don't know
4 = disagree
5 = strongly disagree

1. If management make changes in order to ensure a quality service, that is a perfectly legitimate aim.

   1    2    3    4    5

2. Management and workers are all working towards the same goals here.
3. I'm here to do a job, not decide how it's to be done.
4. I like to think my boss can trust me to perform my work to the highest standard.
5. I think that if I were in management, I would probably have done things in much the same way as they have done them. On the whole, they've done a good job.
6. I can really see the benefit in making some changes around here.
7. If I don't think new procedures are worth implementing, there are ways I can avoid them.
8. It's possible to cover for people if they want to nip home early.
9. I expect to have control over how I do my job.
10. I am capable of determining the best way to do my job.
11. The goals of this organisation are sound, and I will work towards achieving them.
12. Management and workers are all working towards similar goals here.
13. I am always trying to perform better than before.
14. We are a large organisation and need bureaucratic procedures to function effectively.
15. I'm better placed than management to decide how best my job can be done.
16. Management and workers are a team here.
17. Management should determine what a fair day's work is, not me.
18. We are a large organisation and need strong leadership to function effectively.
19. Bureaucratic rules can be very stifling. I find myself less able to take initiative now.
20. There are problems at work, but these are inevitable.
21. Sickies are there not only for physical illness, but also because work gets too much sometimes.
22. Some of the rules make work too slow, so I'll ignore them in order to work more quickly.
23. If procedures change and they make work more difficult for me, I'll try and avoid doing things the new way.
24. What's needed here is more participation in decisions about changes from the people who actually have to make the changes - people like me.
25. If I get a bit annoyed with my boss or my work, I follow all their rules to the letter - even if that slows me down.
26. I do everything they tell me, but I'm sick of it and would leave if I could.
27. If another group tried to take over my group's duties, we'd do something to stop them.
28. Management sometimes wants you to do things that are silly - there's no real reason for them and they just make your job more difficult. I try to avoid doing them.
29. If one of us is unhappy about the way something is done, s/he can rely on the others for support.
30. Management need to remember that I am an individual and you can't always expect general rules to apply.
31. I try to get my boss to let me interpret the rules in the best possible way for my job.
32. It is best to wait awhile before implementing new procedures.
33. I know what a fair day's work is and should be able to determine it myself.
34. Some of the rules go against the way I've been taught how to do things, so I stick to the ways I know.
35. I'd like a similar job, but in another organisation.
36. You never know what management will spring on you next.
APPENDIX TWO

BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

These are the core group of questions which directed research in all organisations. Other issues, though, did emerge during the interview periods, and these are documented as comments in the case studies. Not all respondents answered every question, and the interviews were allowed to wander to areas the respondents identified as significant.

XXX ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE INTERVIEW

ID_____
REC_____

Sex

1 (Male)

2 (Female)

Position Title

Length of Service

Was it possible to make changes here without there being any industrial disputes?
Why?
Has the workforce got much smaller in the last few years?
Why is this so?
Did you know what was happening in the negotiations over the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement?
Who was your best source of information about the progress of the negotiations?
Did you know anyone who was involved in the negotiations?
What do you think the new working arrangements have to offer you as a worker at XXX?
Do you have a career path?
Would you like to make any comments about training?
Would you like to make any comments about management?
Would you like to make any comments about the actual changes in your job?
Why were these changes made?
Who do you think is primarily responsible for promoting these changes?
Were you apprehensive about the changes?
Are you still apprehensive?
Would you like to make any comments about the extent of the changes?
How secure do you feel in your job?
Why do you feel insecure?
Why do you feel secure in your job?
Do you think you got reasonable notification of the changes to your job?
What type of notification did you receive?
Were you able to have any input into the proposed changes before they were made?
What type of input did you have?
What happened to your ideas/suggestions?
How disruptive have the changes been to you personally?
How disruptive have the changes been to your job?
Is your job more varied now?
Is your job more fulfilling now?
Is your job better paid now?
Do you like work more now?

THANKYOU FOR YOUR TIME.
APPENDIX THREE

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The University of Western Australia

Debbi Rosser

Department of Organisational and Labour Studies
Nedlands, Western Australia 6009
Telephone (09) 380 1434
Facsimile (09) 380 1055
Email drosser@ecel.uwa.edu.au

Dear,

As part of my PhD research, I have been studying organisational change in Western Australian industry, but the researcher’s constant dilemma is finding suitable case studies. I believe that the organisational restructure arising from the XXX program at XXX would provide interesting and illuminating data on my thesis topic - How Do Individual Workers Experience Organisational Change?

Therefore, I offer a formal request to conduct anonymous and confidential case study research at the XXX site. Should you accede to this request, my requirements are as follows:

I would need to interview 30-50 non-managerial staff, each interview taking half to one hour.

As the interview data would be confidential, it would be necessary to have a quiet room in which the interviews would be conducted.

The interviews would extend over 5-7 days, with a schedule of 8 per day.

The benefits of this type of research are rarely company-specific, but it is important to extend our knowledge of how employees respond to change in these days of continuous (or discontinuous) change. There are few academic studies which concentrate on employees’ responses to this extent, therefore our knowledge progresses in fits and starts and is commonly based on what we learn through mistakes. Because of confidentiality concerns, I cannot supply information which you might readily apply to advantage, but participating in this research helps develop information which benefits industry in the longer term.

Companies are not identified in my PhD as the thesis deals with employee perceptions, not “truth” per se; and the anonymity of respondent employees is also protected.

I hope you are able to accede to my request, and can assure you that I will conduct the research in accordance with University guidelines as to confidentiality and professionalism.

Thankyou for your consideration,

Debbi Rosser.