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CONTACTS

MyCareer editor:
Eve Fisher
efisher@fairfaxmedia.com.au

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BRIEFCASE

Foreigners hired for postal posts

Clay Lucas reported for Fairfax Media this week on union accusations that Australia Post was using increasing numbers of 457 visa holders to deliver mail as a way to drive down costs. "It's just cheap, unregulated labour that does not comply with minimum wages," Communication Workers Union state secretary Joan Doyle said.

An Australia Post spokeswoman said the agency was not directly hiring employees on 457 visas to work in delivery, and its agreements with its contractors stipulate they employ workers lawfully. bit.ly/10N6Yea

Military might

The Gillard government would employ about 750 full-time-equivalent public servants in 2013-14, however, these would be confined to military personnel, Markus Mannheim reported for Fairfax Media this week. Civilian agencies, such as government departments and statutory authorities, were expected to lose 1262 full-time employees over the next year. bit.ly/10FSoRa

Food for thought

A push by restaurant owners to slash weekend pay for staff would ultimately lead to a cut in wages for more than half a million low-paid workers, the union representing employees in the industry told Clay Lucas for Fairfax Media.

Restaurant and Catering, which represents owners and managers in the industry, appeared before the Industrial Relations Commission in Sydney on Tuesday. Chief executive John Hart presented the industry's case to cut extra payments to employees who work weekends and nights. Instead, only those who work more than five consecutive days would get penalty rates.

The United Voice union said the proposal would see workers take a pay cut to boost the profitability

Net work: Board Diversity website founder David Schwarz.



A chance to get on board

Becoming a non-executive member of a board just got much easier following the launch of a website called Board Diversity.

Started in January by David Schwarz, Board Diversity provides access to advertised board roles and creates networks for non-executives and other board members.

"There are several good reasons for becoming a non-executive board member," Schwarz says. "Firstly, you may be passionate about what the company or organisation does. Secondly, the role can really broaden your own professional experience. Thirdly, it can be a career decision if you decide to take on a number of

board roles. And finally, it's a great networking opportunity."

Board Diversity is now advertising up to 40 non-executive board roles a month in the public sector, primary industry, telecommunications, social business, non-profit sector and banking. Companies advertise free of charge, while those seeking positions pay \$10 a month. More than 200 people have registered. Many roles are voluntary, while others offer payment or reimbursed expenses.

"The great thing about a board role is that there is rarely any conflict with the day job," Schwarz says.

Visit boarddiversity.com.au. **STEPHEN LACEY**

of restaurants. National secretary Louise Tarrant said if penalty payments in the restaurant sector were abolished, related industries in hospitality would follow. bit.ly/103B4sH

Timber!

National Parks around Australia could soon be roaring with the sound of chainsaws if the NSW Forest Products Association gets its way, Sean Nicholls and Peter Hannam reported for Fairfax Media.

The association's executive director, Russell Ainley, said successive state governments had failed to meet guarantees about supply, and that a tenure swap might be one way to achieve targets. "Failure to deliver will end up in jobs being lost," he said.

Environment Minister Robyn Parker said the government did not support commercial logging in national parks and had no plans to introduce it. bit.ly/YUv9re

Compiled by Stephen Lacey

BENIGN TO FIVE

When dream jobs become reality

Me: "I'm doing some research for my column. If you could snap your fingers and change your job right now, what would you change it to?" Friend: "A judge on *The Voice*." Me: "What's *The Voice*?" "Are you joking? It's a reality singing show. On Channel Nine."

"New Faces?" "What? No!" "I thought they might have just rebranded or something. Like when *Temptation* became *Sale of the Century* ... and then back again." "No! They haven't rebranded *New Faces*. It's an entirely separate show." "Right. And what would make you choose this job? I guess one thing is you'd get to meet Bert Newton."

"IT'S NOT NEW FACES!" "OK. OK. Who are the judges?" "There are four - Delta Goodrem, Ricky Martin, and there's Seal." "One of the judges is a marine mammal? Now you're talking!" "No. Seal is a singer from Britain. And also Joel Madden." "The bloke from the KFC ads?" "He's also from the band Good Charlotte."

"Why would they go with the bloke from the KFC ads when they could have had a seal?"

"Anyway, I think it would be an amazing job." "Listen, so far you've described to me the worst show ever put on television. What's the gimmick?"

"The judges are all facing away from the contestants." "Even Bert?"

"BERT'S NOT A JUDGE!" "Even -"

"THERE ISN'T A SEAL!" "You seem upset. I'll ask someone else ..."

"Does that mean I'm not going to feature in your column?" "I didn't say that ..."

Jonathan Rivett blogs at haught.com.au.

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