



28 July 2026

The IEU acknowledges two remarkable union leaders – thank you Sally and Michele

IEU members across the country extend our heartfelt thanks and deepest appreciation to ACTU Secretary Sally McManus and ACTU President Michele O'Neil following the [announcement that they will step down](#) from their national union leadership roles.

Sally and Michele have made an incredible contribution to our nation and will leave a legacy of a stronger union movement and a fairer Australia. Their leadership will be felt for generations in the workplaces they improved and the rights they helped secure.

At a time when union membership is growing and workers have won the most significant improvements to workplace rights in a generation, we celebrate the remarkable contribution Sally and Michele have made. Their ability to unite unions around a common purpose and to lead with conviction through challenging times has been truly extraordinary.

Yet beyond these achievements, what IEU members will remember most is their generosity and genuine care for union members across thousands of workplaces. Whether standing alongside Catholic school staff on strike, supporting preschool teachers fighting for better pay and conditions, or inspiring delegates and activists at countless IEU events and training days, Sally and Michele always ensured IEU members were heard and valued.

IEU members particularly identified with Sally and Michele: professional, passionate and articulate women who represented a movement now strongest in female-dominated industries.

Our national IEU officials, Brad Hayes, Veronica Yewdall and Amanda Hioe, extend their personal thanks for the encouragement and support they received from Sally and Michele as the IEU underwent its own period of leadership renewal in recent years. Sally and Michele welcomed new leaders with generosity and openness, helping to strengthen our movement for the future.

Our union looks forward to working with the ACTU and other affiliated unions in transitioning to a new ACTU leadership team and continuing the vital work of advancing workers' rights.

Today, however, is a moment to celebrate two remarkable union careers.

Thank you, Sally. Thank you, Michele. To the IEU, you are cherished friends, valued allies and an enduring part of our proud union story.