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Page 1 of 1

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The Albanese government has appointed five new members to the Fair Work Commission, all of whom are current or former union officials, to shift the balance away from members with employer backgrounds.

The government also promoted deputy president Ingrid Asbury – a long-standing member of the commission whose background was with employer groups – as a new vice president of the commission.

The five new members, all deputy presidents announced yesterday, are expected to play key roles in the government's ambitious workplace reforms, including multi-employer bargaining and arbitration powers that come into effect in June.

Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke said the appointments were a response to the Coalition "stacking" the commission over the past decade with 26 of its 27 appointments from an employer background.

He said 29 of the commission's

members had employer backgrounds and just nine had worker backgrounds.

"In opposition Labor repeatedly promised to rebalance the commission so workers have just as much of a voice as employers," Mr Burke said.

"For the commission to work as intended it needs to be properly balanced. It should work in the interests of workers and businesses alike."

The new members include ACTU senior legal officer Thomas Roberts, also a former CFMEU legal officer; Australian Services Union deputy secretary Judith Wright; and Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association West Australian secretary Peter O'Keefe.

Sharon Durham, a former industrial relations director with Queensland Health and ex-lead industrial officer with the Queensland Council of Unions, and Alexandra Grayson, a principal lawyer with Maurice Blackburn and an ex-industrial officer with the Finance Sector Union, will be deputy presidents.

Mr Burke flagged more appoint-

ments with worker backgrounds. "Even with these appointments we are still a long way from balance. There is more work to do to correct the Coalition's shameful stack," he said.

However, the appointments come just days after Australian Resources and Energy Employer Association chief executive Steve Knott called for the government to appoint more people with business experience.

He said of the 39 FWC members only one had managed a substantive private sector business.

"The Fair Work Commission needs an urgent injection of real-life experience managing modern, sophisticated businesses," Mr Knott said.

"As it presently stands, the Albanese government is encouraging the FWC to encroach further into the realm of management decision-making with a cohort of people who have never run a business."

He said the government faced "a real test in whether it will continue the politics of stacking and restacking the IR tribunal".